

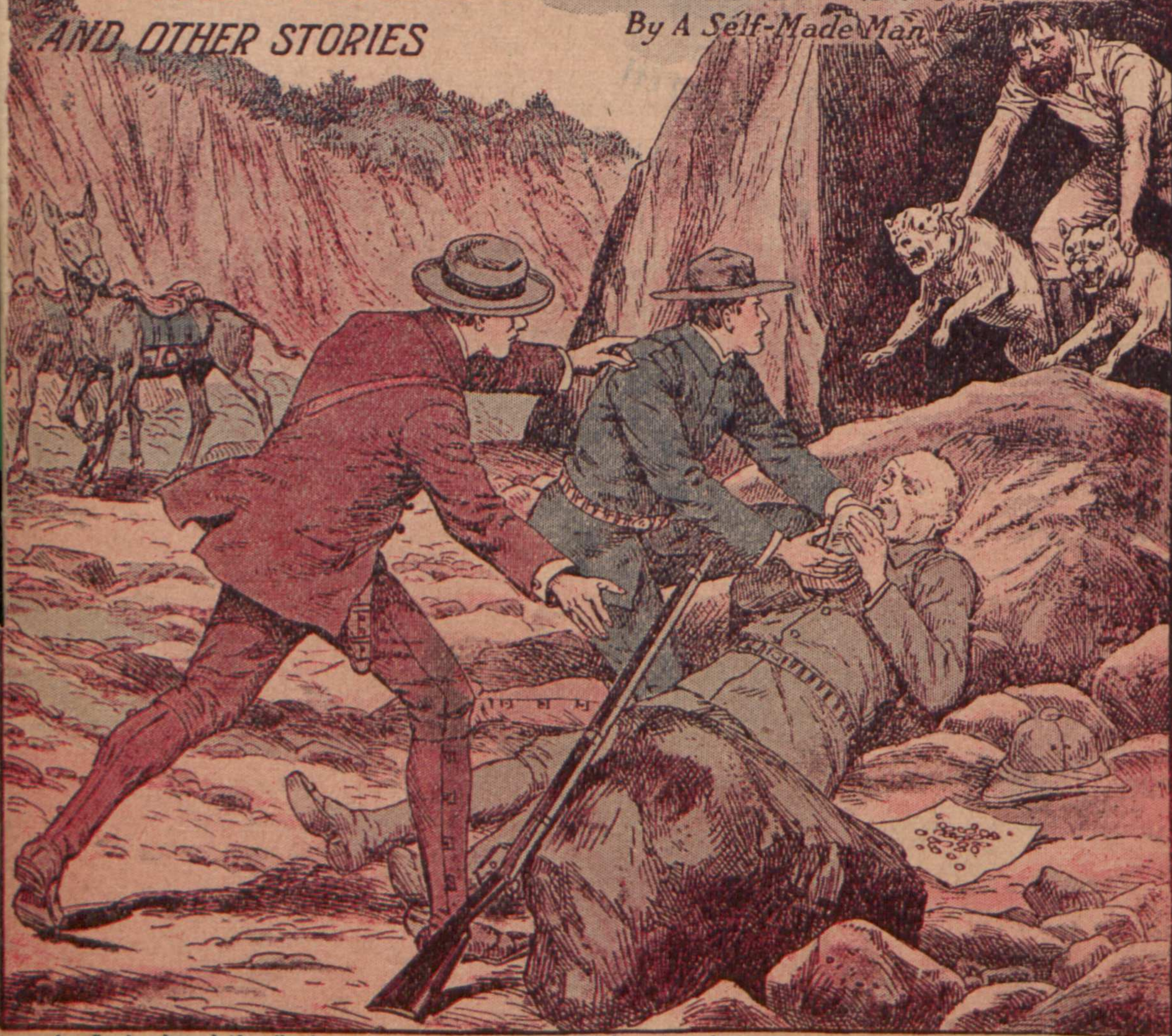
FAME & FORTUNE WEEKLY.

STORIES OF BOYS THAT MAKE MONEY.

A MILLION IN DIAMONDS OR THE TREASURE OF THE HIDDEN VALLEY

AND OTHER STORIES

By A Self-Made Man



As Jack placed the flask to the old man's lips Dick uttered an ejaculation of alarm. "Look!" he cried, pointing. Jack turned and saw a sight that took away his breath—a fierce-looking man about to release two vicious dogs.

1957 - 1958
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LAWRENCE, MASS.

FAME AND FORTUNE WEEKLY

Issued Weekly—Subscription price, \$3.50 per year; Canada, \$4.00; Foreign, \$4.50. Harry E. Wolff, Publisher, 166 West 23d Street, New York, N. Y. Entered as Second-Class Matter, October 4, 1911, at the Post-Office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879.

No. 811

NEW YORK, APRIL 15, 1921.

Price 7 Cents

A MILLION IN DIAMONDS

OR, THE TREASURE OF THE HIDDEN VALLEY

BY A SELF-MADE MAN

CHAPTER I.—A School Printing Office.

"Look here, fellows, I'm sick of this grind!" cried Jack Riddle, waving a composing stick in the air. "This place is more like a prison than a school."

"You bet it is, and I'm just as sick of it as you are," said his particular friend, Dick Thompson. "A healthy school this is, where all of us have had to learn the printing business to help the Reverend Mr. White get out his weekly paper, the Banner of Light, and various other religious publications, free, gratis and for nothing, except the cost of ink and paper."

"What can we do?" asked Steve Bassett, who had a galley proof and a bunch of copy in his hand which he was about to take to the Rev. Mr. White's study, where he expected to be detained as copyholder while the pious head of the scholastic establishment read the proof. "Every time a fellow makes a kick for his rights he is marched to the Black Hole and kept there on bread and water till his heart is broken."

"That's right. It's a dead shame the way we're treated," said Tom Bates.

"The only way we can make a change is to stick together and put up a stiff fight," said Jack. "The Rev. White can't send us all to the Black Hole at one time, for it won't hold more than two or three without squeezing. It's only intended to accommodate one prisoner at a time. If we make a bold stand none of us will go to the Black Hole. The Rev. White will have to yield to our demands if we go on strike in a body."

"Sure he will!" chipped in Dick. "If we all refuse to set another line of type unless we get our half holiday back, how is he going to get his paper out?"

"He'll have to hire regular comps, and pay 'em whatever they charge a thousand ems, and that would send him into a fit," said Bassett.

"Where would he get compositors around here? He might borrow one from the office in town, but one man couldn't get the Banner of Light out, even with Batt Vickers' help. He'd have to send to 'Frisco for at least two men and pay their fare here. That would make a hole in his weekly profits," said Jack.

"Cheese it! Here comes Batt!" cried a small youth named Billy Burns, who had posted himself as a lookout at the door opening on the passage between the printing office and the kitchen.

There was an immediate scattering to their

type cases of the bunch of rebellious amateur typos, and when Batt Vickers, a tall, thin, red-headed and sour-looking boy, who occupied the important position of foreman of the room, made his appearance in the office, the silence was broken only by the click of type as they were dropped into the steel composing sticks. Vickers was a bully who enjoyed the Rev. Mr. White's confidence and favor. The Rev. Mr. White's Academy was situated on the suburbs of the small town of Edenvale, on the line of the Central Pacific Railroad (via Niles), between San Francisco and Sacramento, and the period of our story is a matter of thirty-five years ago.

The three leading actors in the events that follow are now men fifty years of age, and it was from one of them that the author got the facts concerning the marvelous diamond valley from which the hero and his two friends succeeded in bringing away a million dollars' worth of the rough gems. An account of their adventures was printed in the Sacramento and San Francisco papers at the time of their return, so that it is quite possible to verify the facts on which this story is founded. The academy in question united some of the features of an industrial school, inasmuch as the boys had to apply themselves to sundry pursuits when not engaged at their studies. They were instructed in the art of printing, participating in the publication of a religious weekly of limited circulation, edited and published by the Rev. Mr. White. A weekly tract also emanated from the reverend gentleman's printing office, as well as divers specimens of job printing, more remarkable for originality in composition than for typographical beauty.

The type used had all been purchased second-hand, after the sharpness of its face had been considerably worn down. The reverend gentleman prided himself on the large assortment of display fonts he had gathered together at bargain rates because they had outlived their usefulness, and the advertisements set up in these job faces were weird to a degree, owing to the preponderance of fancy type that had gone out of style. The routine of the school was study and recitations from eight in the morning till noon on every day but Saturday. Dinner was then served, and from half-past twelve to half-past one the boys were permitted to amuse themselves in the big yard, as it suited them.

The bell then summoned them to the printing office, where they worked until six. Until a month

since, the boys enjoyed a half-holiday on Saturday afternoon, as the paper was printed on Friday afternoon, but the Rev. Mr. White having purchased a large font of cast-off small pica—the point system had not been introduced at that time—he secured the contract for printing a small religious book, so the boys were compelled to work on it Saturday afternoons and two hours each evening besides. This led to a great deal of kicking on their part, but the only satisfaction they got was a twenty-four hours' imprisonment in the Black Hole, on a bread-and-water diet, which the pious principal found quite effectual in curbing them.

When Batt Vickers entered the printing office, as we have already described, he had a proof in his hand fairly covered with marks. It represented the labored composition of a new recruit lately received at the school—a sensitive, pale-faced lad, who had been sent to the academy by his guardian to get him out of the way. The lad in question, whose name was Bert Dixon, was really out of place in that academy, just as Jack Riddle, Dick Thompson, Tom Bates and one or two others were out of place, for he was a good boy, accustomed to the gentle influence of a good home, until his mother died, leaving him with a few thousand dollars' legacy in trust in the hands of a distant relation of the family, who was appointed his guardian. The guardian, whose name was Noah Davis, lost no time in sending Bert to the Rev. Mr. White's academy, for he and White were friends, and knew each other very well indeed.

Jack Riddle and Dick Thompson had cottoned to Bert at once, and sizing him up as an easy mark for the rest of the bunch to impose on, they had taken him under their wings and given the others to understand that Bert was to be left alone or there would be something doing. The only person who paid no attention to their mandates was Batt Vickers. The proof in question was the first attempt at regular typesetting made by Bert, after several days' practice on short paragraphs. Batt had expected he would make numerous typographical errors when he started him on the copy—a manuscript sermon written or cribbed by the Rev. Mr. White.

Batt halted beside Bert, who was now putting in his time trying to distinguish a p, q, b and d when mixed up in his hand as well as a u and an n.

"Say," said Batt, "what kind of typesticking do you call this?" and he held the corrected proof under Bert's nose.

Bert looked at the slip, which fortunately represented a little less than the third of a galleyful, set in a 13-*em* measure, and gasped. There was hardly a vacant spot on both sides that was not filled up with a pencil mark indicative of an error.

"Did I do that?" asked Bert, trying to recognize his own work.

"Did you do it?" roared Batt. "Who do you suppose did it, you pig-headed idiot? Maybe you think I set it," he added sarcastically.

"Did you?" asked Bert innocently.

As Batt, prided himself on being the best printer in the school, which, to give him due credit, we may say he was, the mere suggestion that he

was the author of such a proof fairly maddened him. With a blow of his fist he knocked Bert spinning against the case behind, and as a galley of newly set type, waiting for a sidestick and quoins to be proved, stood there, the concussion of Bert's body tipped the frame up and his extended arm completed a wholesale "pi" of the type.

The call-down Batt had started in to give Bert naturally attracted general attention, and Jack, looking for trouble, had laid down his stick. He did not expect that Batt would strike Bert, but when he saw the bully do it—and a brutal blow it was, too—he made one dive for the end of the "alley" and handed the young foreman such a smash in the side of the jaw that he went down like a steer in the shambles, and lay in a dazed condition on the floor.

CHAPTER II.—Open Rebellion.

"Bully for you, Jack!" cried Steve Bassett. "Give him one for me, too!"

The printing office was thrown into great confusion. Such was the condition of things when the Rev. Mr. White entered the room with some fresh copy in his hand.

"Wha—what does this mean?" he said, in a tone sufficiently loud to call the attention of the boys to his presence, whereupon there was a confused rush on their part to get busy again. All except Jack returned to their places. He stood over Batt Vickers, who was recovering from the jab, asking him if he wanted any more. The pious proprietor of the school took in the situation at a glance. Apparently there had been a fight between his foreman and Jack Riddle, and Batt had got the worst of it. Whether Batt was to blame in the affair was a matter of no consequence to the reverend gentleman.

"Riddle," he said severely, "how dare you leave your case and attack the head of this room?"

"You'd better ask Vickers why he hit Bert Dixon the cowardly blow he did," replied Jack fearlessly.

"Vickers is in charge of this office and it is his duty to maintain discipline," said the Rev. Mr. White.

"He isn't supposed to maintain it by slugging the meekest boy in the school."

Batt had got on his feet by this time and was holding his injured jaw with one hand as if he was afraid it might fall apart.

"Riddle tried to murder me," he said dolefully.

"Murder you!" gasped the reverend principal, appalled at the idea.

"He hit me with a shooting-stick and nearly broke my jaw," said Batt.

"You're a liar!" flashed Jack. "I hit you with my fist."

"You had something in your fist."

"I had nothing in it," returned Jack.

"You can't tell me that. I felt something harder than your fist."

"We will have no further argument on the subject," said the reverend gentleman. "You stand convicted of striking the foreman, Riddle, and your punishment will be forty-eight hours in the Black Hole. Follow me."

"I protest against such an unjust sentence," said Jack.

"I accept no protest. Discipline must and shall be maintained. It is the rule of this establishment that the guilty shall suffer. You will go to the Black Hole."

"You'd better send Dixon there with him for setting such a dirty proof," said Vickers.

"No; Dixon is only a beginner at the art and can't be expected to do much better at the start. You should have paid more attention to his efforts and not let him go ahead when it was clear he was not competent to set type yet."

"That's right. Give it to him, Mr. White," said Dick, with a grin.

"Who spoke?" asked the reverend gentleman, not liking the remark.

"I did," said Dick boldly.

"You will work an hour overtime by yourself for impertinence."

"I only offered the suggestion, sir."

"You will go without your supper this evening, and continue working while the rest are in the refectory."

"What for?"

"For answering me back in the strain you did."

"Moses; do you want to starve me?" exclaimed Dick, who, having an uncommonly fine appetite, which was always in working order about meal-time, strongly objected to be deprived of his supper, even if it was the least conspicuous meal of the day.

"If you utter another word, you shall have nothing but bread and water for your breakfast," said the Rev. Mr. White.

Dick shut up, but he was boiling over with indignation, which only waxed the hotter when he perceived the satisfied grin on Vickers' face. The reverend gentleman started for the door after commanding the boy to follow him. Jack, however, did not follow him. Looking around upon his fellow-students and co-workers, he believed the time was ripe for bringing matters to a focus. He walked as far as the head of the imposing stone and stopped there. When the Rev. Mr. White reached the door he turned around with the idea of sending the culprit, whom he supposed to be at his heels, ahead of him. He was astonished to find that Jack had not obeyed his orders.

"Riddle!" he cried authoritatively.

"Sir," responded Jack.

"I ordered you to follow me. Come here at once! Do you hear?"

"I hear you; but I'm not coming, just the same."

Here was open rebellion, and the pious gentleman fairly gasped.

"Vickers," he said, "get another boy to help you, and bring him here."

Batt looked helplessly around the office, for he knew not a boy would stand in with him against Jack.

"Bunker," said Vickers, picking out a tough lad Jack had vanquished in a ten-round battle, "lend me a hand."

"Nixy!" replied Bunker. "Get some one else."

"Fellows," cried Jack, "the time has come for action. United we stand a show; divided we are up against it every minute. I'm not going to be put in the Black Hole. Who stands by me?"

"All of us!" shouted the boys.

"You hear, Mr. White?" said Jack. "We have stood this Black Hole business as long as we're going to. We have stood a bread-and-water diet as long as we are going to. Treat us decently, and we'll do our duty, though we do lots of things we hadn't ought to be asked to take a hand in. We want you to abolish the Black Hole and restore our half holiday. Unless you agree, we won't set another type on your paper or on anything else that comes in the office. That's our ultimatum."

"Very well—very well," said the principal. "You shall all rue this moment."

With those words, he left the room.

"Bolt the door," said Jack.

"Hold on a minute," said Dick. "We have struck for our rights, and must stand or fall on the issue, so we want no enemy in our midst. Fire Vickers out and then lock the door."

Half a dozen pairs of hands seized Batt Vickers, and he was rushed into the passage with such speed that he tripped over the sill and measured his length on the floor. Then the door was locked.

"Shove the proof press against it," ordered Jack.

It was done.

"Now, fellows, shut the windows and fasten them. We're going to hold this fort, at all hazards."

He posted a boy watcher at each of the four windows where type stands were, and Billy Burns at the window near the Adams book press. The edition was only half run off, but the press was not likely to turn a wheel again that day. A council of war was held, and each of the boys swore he would stand by Jack, sink or swim. The Rev. Mr. White, in the course of fifteen minutes, returned by way of the passage, accompanied by Batt and his two general helpers—stout, able-bodied men. They found their way blocked by the bolted door, fortified by the barricade of the proof press.

The reverend gentleman called on the boys to open up, but no attention was paid to his demand. As he didn't care to damage his own property, he and the men retreated and soon appeared at the window near the Adams press. They found it closed and the catch on. Looking through the glass, the Rev. Mr. White saw the boys skylarking inside. The sight did not improve his already ruffled temper. He tapped on the window. No one paid any attention to him. He ordered the window to be opened, but without result. Then he led his backers to the other four windows in turn, but found them all down and tight also. He was at his wits' end. His authority was defied by the whole school, Batt Vickers excepted.

CHAPTER III.—The End of the Mutiny.

The Rev. Mr. White was now feeling desperate. He had half a mind to have the passage door battered in so that he and his assistants could get at the ringleaders of the rebellion. Batt, however, suggested that the town police be summoned to reduce the boys to submission.

"Then when you get hold of Riddle, Thompson,

Bassett and Burns you can tie them up and have the men flog them till they yell for mercy," he said.

The reverend gentleman thought the idea a good one, and told Batt to change his clothes and start on the errand. Leaving his two hired men on watch, he went into his private quarters to make a change in his own apparel.

"I wonder what will be the next move against us?" said Dick.

"We'll know when it comes off," said Jack.

"The Rev. Mr. White has posted a watcher on both sides of the building so as to keep tab on us," said Bassett.

"That won't prevent us from leaving by the passage if we want to," said Jack.

"Vickers has likely been posted there to prevent that."

"Vickers! Who cares for him? We'll open the door and see if he's there. If he is, I vote we capture him and hold him a prisoner."

Jack's suggestion met with approval, so the proof press was pulled away and the door opened, but there was no one in the passage.

"It's close to six o'clock, fellows. We are likely to go hungry to-night," said Jack.

The boys began licking their chops as they thought of supper, and they didn't fancy the idea of missing it. They were for making a raid on the kitchen at once. Jack was general enough to know that an empty stomach was a bad thing to hold out on. It was quite possible that the bulk of his crowd would throw up the fight and leave him and the other ringleaders to their fate. Such a thing has often happened in the case of unorganized crowds of men, who have deserted their leaders the moment the shoe began to pinch. Under such circumstances Jack decided to fortify his adherents with food. He was about to order an advance on the kitchen when a knock was heard on the door of that room, and when the boys opened it a young girl, employed as housemaid by Mrs. White, came into the passage. She was on good terms with Jack, Dick and one or two other scholars.

"Hello, Mazie!" said Jack. "You're not against us, are you?"

"Oh, dear no!" replied the girl, coming forward. "I came to tell you that Batt Vickers has just gone into town to fetch the police."

"The dickens!" exclaimed Jack blankly. "That is a serious matter."

The news carried consternation into the ranks of the insurgents.

"We'll have to give in," said one of the boys.

"Give in!" cried Jack. "Why, we'll be tyrannized over worse than ever. We've got to hold out to the last ditch."

"What's the use? It will only be worse for us in the end," said another.

"See what the cook is doing, Mazie," said Jack.

The girl looked into the kitchen and reported that she was out in the yard talking to one of the hired hands.

"Now is our chance, fellows. Get a wiggle on."

The only ones who had the nerve to follow him were those above mentioned. The others held back, afraid of the consequences. Led by Jack, the plucky five entered the kitchen and found a piece of roasted meat, done to a turn, kept hot in the oven, the door of which was partly open.

"Here you are!" said Jack, pulling out the dish and handing it to Billy.

Dick hustled around and found a number of knives and forks which he dropped in his pocket. He captured the carving knife and fork off the table. Bassett rushed away with the pot full of potatoes. Bates grabbed two loaves of bread and the pot of butter. Altogether the boys made a pretty clean sweep of the more important articles intended for supper. Then they retreated to the printing office and barricaded the door again. Everything was placed on the imposing stone without regard to the half made-up form of the two inside pages of the *Banner of Light*.

Seizing the carving knife and fork, Jack commenced to slice the meat, after directing Dick to cut the loaves into slices. The boys gathered around the stone, two and three deep, the smell and looks of the roast making their mouths water. A slice of the meat was laid on a slice of bread and passed to a boy. Bassett handed out a potato. This procedure was repeated until every one, including Jack himself, had been supplied. Billy was then appointed carver to supply a second helping. A rice pudding had been captured, and this was dished out on folded slips of paper. As the food disappeared down the throats of the boys, their courage began to rise again, and by the time every one had been satisfied they were as ripe for mischief and rebellion as ever.

At that moment Batt and two policemen appeared on the scene, accompanied by the Rev. Mr. White. The policemen advanced on the windows.

"Come, now, you young chaps; this has gone far enough," said one of them. "Give yourselves up."

"And be murdered—not much!" replied Dick.

"Every one will be let off without punishment but the leader," said the principal.

"Meaning who?" asked Jack.

The reverend gentleman now had a short conversation with the officers. The result of this was that the reverend gentleman announced that forgiveness would be extended to everybody but Jack, Dick, Bert, Steve and Billy. The first two were to be rigorously proceeded against, Bert was to be placed on a bread-and-water diet for three days, while Steve and Billy, being regarded as very useful adjuncts to the printing office, were to work two hours overtime each night for a week. The Rev. Mr. White regarded this as very good on his part, but he meant to get square with his whole bunch in other ways later on.

"Let's give in," said one of the forgiven ones.

Bert heard this suggestion with indignation.

"What's the use of trying to hold out any longer? We can't stand off the police. I'm through," said another.

The speaker went to the middle window, pushed it up, and jumped out. Like a drove of sheep, the ones who believed they were safe from punishment followed him as fast as they could, to the great satisfaction of the reverend gentleman and his backers, who saw that the backbone of the strike was broken. It was the old story of the mob deserting its leaders.

"The cowards!" cried Dick. "I've a great mind to punch some of them before they get out."

"Don't," said Jack. "Let them go."

"In a few minutes we'll be up against it hard."

"Maybe not. It's getting dark. While these chaps are making their exit by the window, let us five escape by the passage door, get over the fence, and skip."

His proposition was adopted by the condemned five. When the last boy got out of the window the police advanced and looked into the printing office. The five who were to be taken in charge had disappeared.

CHAPTER IV.—On the Road.

"Well, fellows," said Jack, after he and his four companions had scaled the side fence and dropped into the field beyond in the gathering gloom, "we shall be missed and pursued in a few minutes; it behooves us, then, to give the school a wide berth as soon as we can. The best place for us to make for is yonder woods. We shall be safe there."

They hustled across the field as fast as they could go, and reached the edge of the woods. There they paused and looked back to see whether they were pursued. They stood there several minutes, but nothing happened, so they disappeared among the trees. Now that the excitement was over, reflection set in and the question which presented itself to each was what they were going to do. If they went home, they would either be sent back or put to work. Jack's home was in San Jose, Dick's at Gilroy, farther south, while Bert might be said to have no home except his guardian's place at Sacramento.

"Well, fellows, I'm going to Frisco," said Jack. "And I'd like company."

"I'm with you," said Dick.

"I shall stick by you if you'll let me," said Bert.

The three boys did not dream at that moment how momentous their decision was and how it would affect their future. Steve and Billy wanted to go to San Francisco, too, but were afraid to risk it. Without money or acquaintances in the metropolis of the coast they were of the opinion that they would fare much worse than if they went home. When their consultation came to an end, the boys started on through the woods. Night had fallen, but the sky was bright with stars, and the weather was balmy.

"I'll bet the Rev. White has had his hired men out looking for us along the road toward town and away from it," said Jack; "but as long as pursuit hasn't come in this direction we needn't worry."

"It wouldn't have done any good if the men had followed us here; they couldn't have captured us," said Dick. "We could easily have avoided them among the trees in the growing darkness."

"Where do you suppose this route will take us?" asked Bert.

"To the road that runs to Yardley, on the Sacramento River," said Steve.

A few minutes afterward they reached the road which would take them in a somewhat roundabout way to the Sacramento River. This road ran to Edanville in the other direction. To reach the railroad the boys would, of course, have to go to the vicinity of the town, which was practically retracing their steps toward the academy.

"What's the matter with us cutting across the

country to Oakland instead of taking either the railroad or the river?" said Jack. "An air-line route is always the shortest."

"Sure it is, if you don't get lost in the mountains, and don't mind rough travel and aren't afraid of the rattlesnakes. You don't want to take any such route, take my word for it. You go on to the river. It's the longest way around, but it might be the shortest way in the end," said Steve.

"I think Steve's suggestion is the best we can adopt," said Dick. "I move we go on to Yardley."

"All right; Yardley it is," said Jack.

"Then, good-by, fellows!" said Steve. "Billy and me are off for the railroad. We hope to get a ride on the freight part of the way. At any rate, we expect to be home some time to-morrow."

The five boys shook hands all around and divided into two parties—Jack, Dick and Bert taking the road toward the north, with a long tramp before them, while Steve and Billy started off in the opposite direction. Jack and his companions trudged along the silent and lonely road. They walked on for an hour or more and then they saw a ramshackle building standing close to the road.

"Here's our sleeping quarters," said Jack.

"I'm tired enough to drop," said Dick. "I could go to sleep now on the soft side of a plank."

"I didn't know that a plank had a soft side," laughed Jack, as they approached the building. "This house appears to be deserted and looks as if it is falling to pieces by degrees."

"If it should fall to pieces all at once while we're in it, it would be no joke, I can tell you," said Dick.

"Not for us it wouldn't."

The door stood wide open on a single crazy hinge, and they entered, Jack striking a match to see what the interior looked like. It looked the wreck it was—a big room bereft of half its flooring, which appeared to have been torn up at times to furnish fuel for fires lighted by tramps who took temporary possession of it for a night on their way. The gray ashes of successive fires lay scattered on the earth in the middle of the room. A door led to a smaller and even more ruinous room beyond, and a flight of rude stairs communicated with a half-story above. As the prospects on the ground floor were most unsatisfactory, the boys went up the stairs.

Here they found a lot of loose straw lying around. Some of it was bunched in the form of beds, which indicated the use it had been put to.

"This place is pretty decent alongside of the rooms downstairs," said Jack. "We'll shake up this straw, make three fresh bunks and turn in."

This they did, and throwing themselves on them, Dick and Bert were soon asleep. Jack, though as tired as they, could not get asleep for some reason he could not explain. He tossed around from one side to the other, envying his two companions the slumber they were enjoying. The stars shone here and there through the broken roof, winking at him in a knowing way as much as to say, I see you there, my lad, though millions of miles off."

Suddenly he heard sounds of rough voices in

the road. Some men were coming that way. Instead of passing by, they entered the building, and he heard them talking below. He peered down through a chink in the floor just as one of the men struck a light. The fellow flashed it around the room and then ignited the tobacco in his pipe, at which he puffed till it glowed like a live coal.

Jack saw there were three men below—rough-looking fellows—and he wondered if they had stopped at the building to roost, too, in which event he might expect to see them tumbling up the stairs presently. The men, however, seemed in no hurry to go to rest, if such was their ultimate intention. After a desultory talk, one of them went outside and returned with an armful of dry brush and twigs, which he flung down on top of the ashes. A plank or two were then wrenched up, smashed into small pieces and added to the fire as it blazed up. More wood was added from time to time, and then the fire was allowed to burn down to a mass of hot ashes. Into this hotbed a lot of potatoes were inserted and left to cook. The men stood around the smoldering fire smoking and talking. The tenor of their conversation attracted Jack's attention. He learned that they contemplated robbing the home of a well-to-do farmer who lived in that neighborhood. They intended to break into the house about midnight, and get away with such money and valuables as they could lay their hands on. By the time they had completed their plans one of the men announced that the potatoes were ready to be eaten. Each rascal produced some bread and meat from his pocket, together with a flask of whisky, and proceeded to make a meal. After they had cleaned up the food they relighted their pipes and smoked for an hour, talking on various subjects. "It's time for us to make a start," said the leader of the scamps. "Come on."

The three filed out at the door and took the road to the north.

CHAPTER V.—A Turn of Good Fortune and the Reverse.

"I'll have to wake up Dick and Bert, tell them about those men and their purpose, and then we must follow them and save the farmer from being cleaned out," said Jack to himself.

He lost no time in arousing his companions.

"What's the matter?" asked Dick sleepily.

"Wake up, and I'll tell you," replied Jack.

In a few moments Dick and Bert were listening to his story.

"So they're going to rob a farmhouse near by?" said Dick.

"Yes; and it's up to us to prevent them doing it," said Jack.

"It seems to me we're only looking for trouble."

"Pooh! We're going to perform a good action."

"We're liable to get hurt. Suppose those men are armed? They probably won't hesitate to shoot at us if we interfere with them."

"Look here, Dick, if you don't want to take a hand, don't. I'll go on alone, or with Bert," said Jack.

"Oh, if you mean business, I won't back out. I'll go wherever you go."

"And you, Bert?" asked Jack.

"I'm always with you," replied Bert, in his customary quiet way.

"Then let's start, for we have no time to lose."

"Where is the farmhouse?" asked Dick.

"A short distance on the road we're following."

The three boys left the building and took to the road. In about a quarter of an hour they saw a large farmhouse standing a little distance back from the turnpike. A lane led up to it.

"This must be the place," said Jack, opening the gate.

The boys made their way to the house just as a window was thrown open on the second floor and a woman, sticking out her head, began to scream for help. Her cries were doubtless intended to arouse the hired men who slept in an outhouse. She was quickly seized and dragged away from the window, and her cries ceased.

"Come on, fellows!" cried Jack. "We're just in time."

The boys saw that a lower window had been forced and stood open. This was the way the rascals had got into the house.

"We must each get a weapon of some kind, or we won't be able to do much," said Dick.

They looked about the yard, but there appeared to be nothing lying around there.

"Pick up a couple of those stones. They're better than nothing," said Jack.

Stuffing a stone in each of their outside pockets, they entered the house through the window. They found themselves in the kitchen. Jack opened the door of a closet and saw a mop.

"Take this, Bert. Here's a rolling-pin for you, Dick," he said.

He took up a long-handled coal shovel himself. Thus equipped, they entered a passage that connected with the front hall and then started upstairs. The door of the front room was ajar and a light shone through the crack. Jack, who was in advance, peered through and saw a lamp on a center table. Two men were ransacking the bureau drawers. He pushed the door open and dashed at the men. They heard the rush of the three boys, and sprang around.

Jack whacked one of them on the head with the shovel, and Bert shoved the mop in the other's face. Dick finished the same chap with a blow from the rolling pin, stretching him senseless on the floor. The other man drew a revolver and fired at Jack. The boy was so close that the flash half blinded him, while the bullet tore the skin from the lobe of his ear. Bert brought the mop down on the rascal's head and he dropped the revolver. Then Dick seized him around the chest and tripped him up on the floor.

The other two jumped on him. At that moment the third man, who had been searching a back room, attracted by the racket, rushed on the scene. When he saw how things were going, he concluded it was time to save himself, for he took the boys for three hired hands, and he felt he alone would stand little show against them. He was satisfied if he could get away with the plunder he had in his pockets. So he made tracks for the open window in the kitchen, leaving his pals to their fate. The boys secured the second

rascal by tying his hands behind his back with a handkerchief.

"Go and look for the other fellow," said Jack, handing Dick the revolver.

Dick and Bert proceeded to do so, while Jack went to the bed in the room, where the farmer and his wife lay bound and gagged, and released them.

"You and your companions came just in time," said the farmer. "You are all strangers to me. Where did you come from?"

"We were traveling along the road to-night and I overheard the three rascals planning to rob your place. We decided that it was our duty to try and save you from being robbed, and I guess we have succeeded," replied Jack.

"I am under great obligations to you and shan't forget to reward you for your timely aid," said the farmer.

At that point Dick and Bert re-entered the room and reported that they could find no trace of the other man.

"I guess he skipped out when he heard the noise in this room," said Dick.

"Well, we've got two of them, at any rate," said the farmer. "I'll have to get some rope and tie them so they can't get away."

He found a piece of line in the kitchen and the two rascals were tied tight. With the help of the boys they were carried into the barn and further secured to a couple of uprights.

"They'll be safe there for the rest of the night. Where were you boys going? To the village a mile beyond here?" asked the farmer.

"We were bound for Yardley," replied Jack.

"Why, that's all of thirty miles by the most direct route! You didn't intend traveling at night, did you?"

"No. We were roosting in a deserted building down the road a little way when those men came in there and I overheard their scheme to rob you," said Jack.

"How does it happen you lads are tramping it? You look like respectable boys, not accustomed to such a thing."

"We've run away from the Edenvale School because we were badly treated there. I am telling you this in confidence, and with the understanding that you won't send word to the Rev. White that you've seen us," said Jack.

"I am sorry to hear that you thought it necessary to run away from your school, though I can't say that I think much of that establishment from all I've heard about it. I certainly won't make any trouble for you. That would be a poor return for the service you have rendered me. Well, you must stay at the house for the rest of the night, have breakfast with us in the morning, and then I'll save you further tramping by carrying you in my light wagon to Yardley in time to get the Sacramento boat if you wish to take it."

He took them back to the house, showed them into two spare rooms and left them to finish the night under the bedclothes of real beds, which they found ever so much more comfortable than the straw of the deserted building down the road. On examining his rooms, the farmer found that he had lost about \$50 worth of property which had been carried off by the rascal who made his escape. That was small alongside what he would

have lost but for the opportune arrival of the boys. After breakfast in the morning the farmer put a fast young horse to his light wagon, loaded the two prisoners in the back part, with Dick and Bert to watch them, and with Jack beside him on the seat drove to the village, where he reported the attempted robbery and turned the prisoners over to the constable. Jack wrote out a statement of the conversation he had overheard between the men in the deserted building, proving they intended to rob the farmer's house, signed it before the justice and swore to its truthfulness. The farmer then drove on to Yardley, where they arrived about two o'clock.

He presented Jack with \$50 in gold, and told him and his companions that any time they came near his house again he hoped they would call and see him. Then after treating them to dinner at a restaurant he bade them good-by and started back home.

"We're in luck, fellows," said Jack. "We can take the boat in style and have money enough left on our arrival in Frisco to pay our expenses for a while. Those three rascals proved a regular windfall to us. Steve and Billy have nothing on us now. After all, we did the right thing in taking Steve's advice."

"Bet your life!" said Dick. "Fifty dollars will put us on Easy street until we strike a job, for, of course, we'll have to go to work."

The boys walked around Yardley till the boat came in, when they went aboard of her and were soon on the way down the river. The boat reached her wharf a little late that night, and the boys stepped on shore in the van of the rest of the passengers. In those days, when there was only a one-rail route to Sacramento, the roundabout one via Niles, over which all transcontinental trains then passed, the travel by boat down the river was heavier than it is to-day, or has been for many years. There were a score of hacks in waiting, but the boys did not propose to patronize one.

Jack had been in San Francisco before, but had no general knowledge of the city. It was easy to walk straight up to Kearney street, by way of Washington or Clay. Instead of following either of those streets, Jack carried his companions into Pacific street, which showed that the boy had got his bearings a bit twisted. Now, the lower part of Pacific street in those days, whatever it is to-day, was a mighty tough locality to pass through, particularly at night. It was ill-lighted, rather narrow, and lined with saloons, sailors' boarding houses, slop-shops, marine stores of a low grade, possessing altogether a slummy look. The three well-dressed boys attracted considerable notice, and it was attention they didn't like. However, they were getting on all right until they came abreast of a certain low groggery. It was the headquarters of a well-known crimp, or a man who made it his business to ship sailors, by fair means or foul, that came within his reach.

In the prosecution of his business he stood in with the proprietors of many of the houses along the upper end of Kearney street and others scattered along the Barbary Coast. Just now the supply of victims happened to be short, and he had orders unfilled on his hands. The crimp in question was standing outside his door talking

with a couple of his heelers. The moment his eyes lighted on the boys something prompted him to size their athletic figures up as fair game for him. They were not sailors, it is true, but that didn't matter in an emergency. Drugged and rigged out with slop clothes, they might be passed off as ordinary young seamen. The captain of the vessel wouldn't discover the cheat till he was out at sea, and then it would be too late for him to protest. The only thing he could do, then, was to put them to work learning the ropes, and make the best of a bad bargain. The crimp had worked that game more than once before and profited by it. He tipped the wink to his heelers, and the three boys were suddenly seized and run into the saloon before they realized what they were up against.

CHAPTER VI.—Hard Luck.

As they were dragged back to a rear room, the boys began a struggle and vigorous protest against the rough handling they were receiving.

"Shut up, young feller!" said the crimp, who had hold of Jack. "We've taken a fancy to you, and we're goin' to provide for you."

The boys, realizing the seriousness of their situation, called loudly for help, and put up the best resistance they could. But they had no show, for other hangers-on joined in and they were forced into the back premises, where the rascals threatened to hit them with slungshots if they didn't keep quiet. The crimp brought in three glasses of doctored whisky and they were told to drink it.

The boys refused to touch it. Thereupon they were again seized, their mouths forced open and the liquor poured down their throats, at the risk of choking them. The drug soon got in its fine work and they went off into a sleep. They were then searched and the bulk of the \$50 found on Jack was appropriated by the crimp. They were stripped of their good clothes, which were afterward sold to a man next door, and dressed in rough togs that fitted them none too well. Then they were left to themselves till about midnight, when a hack was brought to the door and they were put in it, the crimp going along with a heeler on the box beside the driver. The vehicle was driven down to one of the wharves where a number of whitehall boats were on hire. Boatmen were to be found at all hours hanging around the neighborhood, and the crimp engaged one who frequently helped him in his dirty work. The three boys were removed from the hack to the boat. The boat was rowed out some distance in the stream to a dirty-looking bark that was ready to put to sea with the next flood tide then making. The lads were hoisted over the side by the crimp and his heeler.

"They look kind of green," said the first mate, examining the boys by the light of a lantern.

"They're all right and the best I could get you at short notice. Take 'em or leave 'em," said the crimp.

"I must see the cap'n," said the mate. "What do you ship them as?"

"Ord'nary jacks, of course. They ain't A. B.'s, but they know the ropes well enough."

The mate reported to the skipper and that per-

sonage made his appearance and looked the boys over.

"Do you call those boys sailors?" cried the captain.

"If they ain't, you can call me a liar," said the crimp.

The skipper had his doubts, but as he was anxious to get to sea that morning he agreed to take the three boys on the crimp's terms, for if he didn't take them he would be obliged to sail short-handed.

"Where's their dunnage?" he asked, meaning their clothes bag.

"You'll have to fit 'em out and charge it ag'in 'em," said the crimp, with a leer, as he pocketed his money—the advance which each sailor received on shipping.

So the boys were not only sent afloat against their will and knowledge, but were robbed as well. Two hours later a tug came alongside, hitched on, and pulled the bark out to "The Heads" and over the bar. Sail was then made by the watch on deck and the vessel was headed toward the Farallone Islands, about twenty-five miles away. When the boys came to their senses, hours later, the bark was out of sight of the California coast. Their bewilderment was intense when they found themselves at sea.

"We've been shanghaied!" cried Dick, who had read considerable about that disreputable practice. "We're up against it for fair."

There wasn't any doubt about that, as they soon found out. The captain was mad when he discovered they were really greenhorns. He declared he would get the worth of his money out of them somehow, so he ordered them to be fitted out and put into the watches—Jack and Bert in the first mate's, and Dick in the second mate's. That settled their fate, and they were forced to turn to and do their duty with the rest of the crew. For the first time in their lives the boys learned what real hardship was. The petty tyranny of the Rev. Mr. White's academy was a mere flea bite in comparison.

It was a kick here and a blow there to "freshen their way," until they felt like jumping overboard. The first rough sea made them deathly sick for two days, during which time they would not have cared if they had been flung overboard, where at least their misery would have had an end, in this world at least. Hardly had they acquired what the sailors call their sea legs than the bark ran into a howling gale that drifted them miles and miles out of their course, and finally landed the vessel a wreck on the coast of Ecuador, South America.

It was a barren and deserted stretch of land, under the shadow of the Andes. On the other hand was the Pacific, beating upon the shore. The wreck of the bark lay on her beam ends, broken in the middle, and pretty well demolished forward. Her stern, as far as the break of the after-deck, was about the only part of her that had escaped destruction. Not a human being but the apparently lifeless forms of Jack and Dick was in sight—lying stretched on the shore. How they, the least important part of the vessel's company, happened to survive was one of those mysteries which is understood only by an all-wise Providence. Jack was the first to realize that he was still in the land of the living. He sat up,

looked around and saw the agitated waves, the desolate shore, and the far-off mountain range. The sight was not an inspiring one.

"Good heavens! Am I the only survivor?" he groaned.

Then he saw something rise from behind a piece of broken spar, and his eyes rested on Dick.

"Dick, is that you?" he asked.

"It's me, all right. Where are we at?"

"I've no more idea than a cat. Where's Bert?"

"I'll never tell you. We seem to be the only ones lucky enough to reach the shore. It was sure an awful storm."

"Poor Bert! Can it really be that he is drowned?"

"I don't see a sign of him anywhere. Gee, but it's hot! Let's crawl under the shade of the wreck."

The shadow of the wreck was thrown sharply upon the land. At that moment Jack saw another shadow—a human being—rise above the bulwark line and stand there motionless.

"Hello!" he exclaimed. "There's somebody aboard the wreck. We're not the only ones alive, after all."

He jumped up and ran out from under the tilted stern to see who the other survivor was. Looking up, he saw a form clinging to the deck railing on the raised side, with his back toward him.

"Hello-o-o!" shouted Jack.

The figure turned around and looked in the direction of the hail. Jack uttered a cry of joy, for he recognized Bert Dixon.

CHAPTER VII.—The Boys Find Food.

"It's Bert! He's alive!" said Jack to Dick.

"You don't mean it!" cried his companion, springing up and joining him.

Dick speedily saw that Jack had made no mistake about it, for there was Bert sliding down to the lower rail, over which he dropped and landed on the sand.

"I'm awfully glad to see you chaps," said Bert, his face shining with an eager light. "I thought I was the only one who had escaped a watery grave. It was a terrible feeling to think that one was wholly alone on this desolate-looking shore."

Jack and Dick each grasped him by a hand and told him how delighted they were to find he was alive and kicking, like themselves.

"You must have come ashore on the wreck itself," said Jack.

"I did," replied Bert. "A big wave dashed me into the cabin passage and swept me into the cabin. My head struck something hard there, the leg of a chair, or the table, probably, and I remember nothing more till I recovered my senses, and found the bark at rest, on her port beam, and the sun shining down through the companion stairs. It was a truly remarkable change from my last recollection of the vessel tossing about at the mercy of the wind and the sea, and I could hardly realize that I wasn't dreaming."

"I soon found I was not, and then the conviction struck me that the bark had gone ashore

somewhere. I left the cabin as soon as I could, mounting the stairs to the deck. From there I had a good look at the prospect about as well as the condition of the bark herself. My heart sank when I saw nothing but the tumbling sea on one side and the inhospitable shore on the other, with not a sign of life anywhere in sight. You can't imagine how I felt as I clung to the rail and looked about me. Then I heard your shout, and I turned and saw you, Jack. I was so overjoyed to find that I was not alone that I nearly lost my grasp on the rail. To know that we three, companions in hard luck, are together again, makes me feel that life still has something in it for us, after all."

"I hope so," returned Jack, "but the prospect just now is not very inviting. We have been saved from the sea, it is true, but where are we? How far from civilization? Is this place a big island, or the coast of South America? The Galapagos Islands near the equator and 200-odd miles off the northwest part of Peru are big ones."

"Oh, we're not so far south as Peru," said Jack. "When the storm hit us four days ago we were hundreds of miles from the northern coast of South America."

The boys speculated for some time as to their actual whereabouts, and then their thoughts reverted to a most important matter—they were hungry; there wasn't a house in sight, nor any indication of human life. How were they to exist under such conditions?

"Oh, I guess we'll find something to eat aboard the wreck," said Jack.

"The galley is gone. How can we cook any food if we find it?" said Dick.

"That's easy. Build a fire on the shore."

"But if we have no cooking utensils we won't be able to do much."

"Oh, we'll get along somehow, don't you worry. Come on, we'll go aboard and see what we can discover. I dare say we shall find something in the pantry off the cabin passage."

The shipwrecked three found no great difficulty in making their way to the pantry. There they found everything in the place in confusion. The floor was littered with the contents of the shelves. An inspection of the miscellaneous assortment yielded pots of preserved meats and cans of vegetables, jars of jellies, bottles of preserved fruits, some of which were broken, and many other things. Several smoked hams inclosed in tight coverings swung from hooks in the ceiling, and there were opened boxes containing wine, whisky, preserved jars of ginger, besides flour, sugar, coffee, potatoes and other articles.

"I guess we won't go hungry," said Jack. "There's quite a supply of food on hand."

"There ought to be a lot more in the lazaretto under the cabin," said Dick. "One of the crew told me that was where the bark's stores were kept."

"So much the better," replied Jack.

"But you don't expect to hang around this wreck, do you?" said Bert.

"Of course not. But we'll probably need a good supply of food to last us on our road to the nearest town, for we can't count on making rapid progress in this hot latitude."

"The more food we load ourselves down with

the slower will be our journey. By the way, how about fresh water?" said Dick.

The boys were making a meal off potted meat and crackers while they were talking, and Dick was the first to feel thirsty.

"I don't know," said Jack. "I suppose all the water-casks have been washed away. There were a couple lashed to the side of the galley, but they're gone, I know. We might be able to find a water barrel in what is left of the hold forward, but it will be only a chance."

"But, in the meanwhile, we've got a drink."

"There's a case of California white wine which is about as light as wine comes. We might manage to do with that till we find water."

"I suppose we'll have to make it do."

"There's the steward's fancy water-keg in the corner. Perhaps there's some water left in that," said Bert.

Dick, being the nearest to the keg in question, laid hold of it.

He found it quite heavy and judged that it was full.

It was what was called a 10-gallon keg.

"There's water in it and lots of it," said Dick, picking up a cup within his reach and turning the brass cock.

"Another problem solved," said Jack. "We're doing pretty well under the circumstances."

The boys agreed that they were, and were now quite cheerful and hopeful.

"If we reach a town all right we'll be better off than had we been obliged to continue our voyage to Sydney," said Dick. "That would have been a long trip, and judging from the experience we have gone through I guess we would have been mighty sick of sea-life by the time we reached Australia."

"That's my opinion," said Jack. "We thought we were badly used at the academy, but, gracious! that was a paradise alongside the life we led on this bark."

"Our persecutors have all gone to get their reward, so we have it on all of them now," said Bert.

"That's a whole lot of satisfaction to me," said Dick. "I hope the chief mate is roasting in Hades. He nearly broke my jaw the morning the gale started. I never met such a brute before. Such men ought not to be officers of ships, or in any position that gives them unlimited authority over people working under them."

As soon as they had finished their meal, as they had eaten very little for the past three days, everybody on board the bark having been compelled to go on short commons, since it was out of the question to light a fire in the galley while the storm was at its height, Jack suggested that they straighten up the contents of the pantry and make an inventory of what they had there.

"Oh, we've lots of time to do that. I don't feel like working at present. I want to lie down in the shade and go to sleep," said Dick.

"Go and lie down, then; Bert and I will attend to the matter," said Jack.

"Why don't you wait till later on and let me help?"

"No time like the present," replied Jack, starting in on the job.

Bert gave him a hand, and Dick, feeling that he could not drop out, joined in, though with man-

ifest reluctance. The pantry was soon cleaned up and the various pots, jars and tins duly sorted and piled up against the inclined wall.

"Now we'll go and take a siesta," said Jack.

"That's Spanish for forty winks, ain't it?" grinned Dick.

"It's Spanish for a nap in the daytime, as I understand it."

"Say, it's a good thing you understand the language pretty well, for it's generally spoken in South America, I believe. You'll be able to pow-wow with a native when we run across one. When a fellow who can only speak his native tongue finds himself in a foreign land he realizes he is at a great disadvantage when it comes to the necessity of making himself understood," said Dick.

"I'm quite a linguist, for I understand French as well as I do Spanish," said Jack.

"Is that so? I didn't know that before. However, you won't need any French in these diggings. Your Spanish, however, will come in first rate."

The boys took refuge under the lee of the wreck, which furnished the only shade near by, but though out of the sun it was roasting hot and sleep was almost out of the question at first. After a while the heat produced the contrary effect and they dozed off, perspiring at every pore. They did not wake up till late in the afternoon. The few garments they had on were wringing wet. Dick was the first to open his eyes.

"Oh, my, this is fierce!" he ejaculated. "I'm parboiled. I'm going in the water if I can find a safe spot to bathe."

He got out of his trousers and walked down to the edge of the still ruffled Pacific. The waves rushed in and receded with such force that he did not dare trust more than his lower limbs in the swash for fear of the undertow carrying him away. He walked along the shore a short distance till he came to a basin protected by a circle of rocks. Here the water was deep enough for a limited swim.

"Gee, but this is fine!" said Dick, diving in.

He splashed around in the shade of the rocks, delighted beyond measure.

"This is the first time I've felt really good to-day. I must put Jack and Bert wise to this," he added.

Finally he crawled on the rocks and looked in the direction of the wreck. He saw Jack and Bert standing up looking toward the shore. They had seen his clothes on awakening and judged he was in bathing, but at what spot they couldn't make out.

"I hope he hasn't been so reckless as to trust himself in the surf," said Jack. "The undertow would make short work of him."

"He doesn't appear to be in sight," said Bert anxiously.

At that moment a distant shout arrested their attention.

"There he is over on the rocks," said Jack. "I guess he's struck a safe spot. Come on, Bert."

They walked over to the basin.

"Peel off and come on in. The water's fine," said Dick.

His companions lost no time in following his example, and the three enjoyed the time of their lives for nearly an hour. By that time the sun

was low in the west, painting a glittering golden pathway across the heaving ocean. They returned to the wreck, made another meal and got down on the sand again. Darkness came on with the setting sun, with no intervening twilight, but it was not really dark, for the sky glittered with myriads of stars, and objects were visible at a considerable distance. The boys talked about the future, planning a trip along the shore in search of a town or village where they could get in touch with civilization, until they grew sleepy and fell into a dreamless slumber.

CHAPTER VIII.—The Inn on the Road.

The boys hung around the wreck for two days, making their preparations for a start. They made up three good-sized bundles of provisions, which included a bottle of water each. Jack suggested that they bury the rest of the eatables, as well as the cases of wine and brandy.

"We may have to come back this way, and then we'll need the food."

"Do you expect the wreck will go to pieces?" asked Dick.

"No, but a bunch of tramping natives of the country might come this way after we are gone and clean out the wreck."

So the remaining contents of the pantry was made a cache of in a large opening of the rocks around the basin.

"We can only travel during the darkness," said Jack, "for the sun is too hot for us in the daytime. So if it's all the same to you chaps, we'll start out in the course of an hour."

No objection was offered to this suggestion, and in due time they turned their backs on the wreck and set their faces toward the north. After jogging along for a couple of hours they found further progress along the shore blocked by a long stretch of rocks extending down into the sea. They were obliged to strike into the interior over a rough and rocky way. Finally they hit a place where tramping was a little better. This path indicated that travel sometimes came that way. It took them into a hilly section, away from the sea and toward morning they entered a wood.

As this place promised shelter from the sun, Jack called a halt, for they were tired of the first stage of their tramp and, laying down their packs, they turned in for a sleep. They did not wake up till the middle of the afternoon. They partook of the first meal of the day, drank sparingly of the water, since that was their most precious possession, and they had but a limited quantity with them. Then they resumed their journey under the trees, going slowly.

They halted at intervals and finally darkness came on again.

About nine o'clock they ate again and then resumed their way.

The woods was an extensive one for there seemed to be no end to it.

They were still in it when morning came and they lay down again to sleep.

They awoke late in the afternoon, took dinner and started on again.

"Say, isn't it about time we got out of this wood?" asked Dick.

"How should I know?" asked Jack. "Do you take me for an animated guide-book of this part of the country?"

"I merely asked the question."

"Well, as I never was here before, I can't answer your remark. It may take us a week to pass through it, or we may make our exit from it in half an hour."

"I hope it will be in half an hour. I feel lost in this place. Maybe we are lost. We may tramp on till our food gives out, and then we'll starve to death. Perhaps we'd better turn back and go in the other direction."

"Don't get discouraged so soon. The longest lane has a turning, and this wood is sure to have its limit."

"We may be no better off then."

"We can't help that."

Shortly after darkness fell they emerged from the wood and found themselves on a mountain road.

"This must lead somewhere," said Jack. "Step out. Perhaps we shall soon strike a house or a village."

"I hope so," said Dick.

Half an hour later, when they rounded a great rocky spur, they saw a light before them, shining from the window of a house beside the road.

"Hooray! We've hit something at last!" said Dick, in a tone of satisfaction.

They hurried forward, believing that the worst of their journey was behind them. As they drew near the house they saw it bore a swinging sign above the door.

"I believe it's a mountain inn," said Jack.

"So much the better," returned Dick. "There wouldn't be an inn unless there was travel to support it. That means we must be on the road to a town. Luck seems turning our way at last."

They marched up to the door of the house which bore the swinging sign, indicating its inn-like character, and Jack knocked. In a few minutes the door was opened by an uncommonly pretty girl, in a short, bright-colored gown, who asked, in Spanish, what the *senor* wanted.

"Is this an inn?" Jack asked, in Spanish.

"Si, *senor*," she answered, after a momentary hesitation.

"How far is it to the nearest town?"

"How far? Does not the *senor* know?" she asked, in some surprise.

"No, *senorita*, or I wouldn't have asked for the information."

"But you must have come from Dolores."

"No, *senorita*; we have just come through the woods from the coast."

"From the coast! Is it possible? There is no town in that direction for more than thirty miles."

"We were shipwrecked, *senorita*, and are on our way to the nearest town or village."

"Shipwrecked!" she exclaimed, in some astonishment.

"Yes, *senorita*. We are strangers to this land. Are we in Peru?"

"In Peru? Why, no, this is Ecuador."

"Then we are farther north than we supposed. But you haven't answered my question about the nearest town. Is it Dolores, which you just mentioned?"

"Si, *senor*."

"And is it far along this road?"

Before she could reply, a man, with a rascally-looking face, came up behind her.

"Who are you talking to, Pepita?" he said roughly.

"Three boys, who wish to find their way to Dolores."

Pushing her aside, the man framed himself in the doorway. He took the boys in as well as he could under the starlit sky.

"Will the young men walk in and make themselves at home?" he said.

"We have no money to pay for entertainment," said Jack. "All we wish to know is how far is it to the next town?"

"No. money! It is true, then, that you have been shipwrecked."

"Quite true, senor."

"Then you are welcome to the hospitality of my poor inn for the night without charge. In the morning I will myself see you to Dolores, as I am going there on business."

Had Jack been acquainted with the character of the innkeeper, he would not have thought of passing even a single night under his roof, but as the man was a complete stranger to him he had no means of guessing what was behind the seemingly gracious invitation. Yet he did not fancy the looks of the man much, for unless his face greatly belied him, he hardly looked like a person to be trusted.

Still, as he and his companions had nothing about them to lose, he concluded that it would be better to accept the invitation than to pass the night out of doors. So telling his companions to follow, he stepped into a fair-sized room, where a table was spread in readiness for the meal and an old woman, of unfavorable looks, was cooking on an open fire. The innkeeper pointed at a bench as a sign for the boys to be seated. The room was lighted by the lamp which stood on the window ledge. This was the light which had guided the young Americans to the house. The old woman turned around and looked at them curiously. Then she beckoned the man over and said something to him in a low tone. The innkeeper nodded and came back to Jack, whom he plied with questions about the wreck and its location; also who they were, and where they came from, as well as many other queries. The girl, who was helping the old woman in her culinary operations, showed considerable interest in Jack and his companions. The innkeeper, observing her curiosity, stamped his foot in a savage way and gave her a look which caused her to withdraw her notice.

Presently two other men entered the room from the rear. They appeared to be surprised at seeing the boys, but made no remark. The old woman announced that supper was ready, whereupon the innkeeper told the boys to sit up and make themselves at home. Jack translated the invitation to his friends, and as the stew which had been dished up from the pot smelled inviting, they were glad to accept. The places that were intended for the old woman and the girl were given to Jack and Dick, and room made for Bert. The girl passed around slices of buttered bread, and the repast was topped off with coffee. The innkeeper himself handed around the latter. The girl moved around the room like a person on pins and needles, as the expression is.

"Will the senor have another piece of bread?" she said, as Jack was lifting the cup to his lips.

As she offered the bread she hit the cup in an awkward way, upsetting it, with a crash, on the floor. The innkeeper sprang up with an imprecation, and said something fiercely in French. Jack understood it and it aroused his suspicions. When the innkeeper got him a fresh cup of the coffee, the boy saw him drop something into the cup.

"The rascal is up to some villainy," thought Jack. "I believe he intends to drug me."

Fearing that the coffee served to his companions had been dosed, he was about to warn them not to touch it, when he saw that he was too late, for both Dick and Bert had drained their cups.

"The young senor will pardon the awkwardness of my daughter," said the innkeeper, setting the fresh cup before him.

"Certainly," said Jack, who happened to be seated next to him.

Seeing that the innkeeper had not yet touched his own coffee, an idea flashed through the boy's head. He saw the girl standing back in the corner regarding him with a look of apprehension.

"Your daughter is making signs to you, senor," he said.

The innkeeper, who was in the act of reseating himself, rose again with another imprecation and made a rush for the girl. She fled with a scream through the rear curtained door. This drew general attention away from the table, and Jack took instant advantage of it to deftly exchange cups with his host. The innkeeper did not pursue the girl, but said something in French to her from the door, after which he returned to the table and seated himself. He went on with his supper.

"You are not drinking your coffee, senor," he said, with furtive impatience. "Is it not to your liking?"

"It is very good, indeed," replied Jack, raising the cup to his lips and drinking it off.

The innkeeper watched him with covert satisfaction. Then he drank the drugged coffee himself without the least suspicion that he had fallen into his own trap.

CHAPTER IX.—Jack Saves Pepita's Life.

All hands got up and the old woman sat down herself. The innkeeper called the girl, and she slowly made her appearance, in fear and trembling. He pointed at the table, and she sat down without looking at Jack. Dick yawned sleepily, while Bert looked fishy about the eyes.

"The young senors had better retire," said the innkeeper blandly. "I will take you upstairs to a room where you will sleep soundly until the morning."

Taking a small lamp off a shelf, he lighted it and motioned the boys to follow him. Jack saw signs pass between him and the other two men who were standing near the window, lazily smoking cigarettes. Dick and Bert were both eager to lie down on any kind of a bed, for they could hardly keep their eyes open, but Jack was wide awake as he had ever been in his life. His only hope lay in the fact that the innkeeper had drug-

ged himself, and would not be able to take part in his contemplated rascality. The boys were led to a room containing four rude beds.

"You do not need a light, senors," said the innkeeper. "The moon is just rising and will presently shine in through that window," pointing at an open one.

"All right," responded Jack, anxious to get rid of the fellow. "We'll be in bed and asleep in five minutes. We're pretty well played out," and he yawned as if dead tired, while his companions, kicking off their shoes, dropped heavily on a bed each and were asleep almost immediately.

The innkeeper grinned in a sly way, nodded and left the room, closing the door after him. Jack heard his feet on the stair as he went down. He walked to the door and found that it had neither lock, bolt, nor catch to it. The only way to prevent it from being opened was to barricade it from the inside, but the beds and a couple of stools, all the furniture the room contained, was not very well adapted for that purpose. It was evident from the open window, through which Jack saw that escape could easily be made, that the innkeeper had full confidence in the drug he supposed had been administered to the three.

Opening the door, after removing his shoes, Jack crept softly downstairs and peered through the folds of the curtain into the main room. The old woman and the girl were finishing their supper at the table. The innkeeper and his two associates were standing close to the curtain, talking together in low tones in French. They were thoroughly conversant with that language, and Jack blessed his stars that he had acquired a fair knowledge of it. In a few minutes he learned the purpose that the innkeeper had in view. It was to carry the boys into the interior and sell them to the overseer of a copper mine, within the depths of which they would be compelled to slave without the least chance of escape. Jack did not fully realize the awful fate that would be theirs if once they were sent down into the mine, but judged that it would be tough enough.

"Go and get the mules ready," said the innkeeper. "They are all asleep by this time, and the sooner we start, the better, for it will take all night to make the journey through the mountains."

Jack slipped to one side when he saw the two rascals start for the curtain, through which they had to pass on their way to the rear. They did not notice him in the darkness, and when their footsteps died away outside Jack returned to the curtain. The innkeeper was lighting a long, native cigar at the fire. He turned around and berated Pepita for what he called attempted treachery on her part.

She denied that she had intentionally upset the coffee in Jack's hand. The innkeeper, however, was not convinced of her innocence, and threatened to make short work of her if she ever did such a thing again. Jack was satisfied the girl was not the villain's daughter, and he wondered why she remained with him, unless it was because she was afraid to run away. The innkeeper began to yawn and rub his eyes, whereat he muttered some unintelligible expression, and looked fiercer than ever. Finally he dropped into a chair at the table and the old woman asked him what was the matter.

"Sacre! I know not. I feel very queer," he returned, half in French and half in Spanish.

"You look sleepy. You didn't make a mistake in the coffee, did you?" said the woman.

"By gar!" he hissed fiercely, trying to rise, "I made no mistake; but something is the matter."

Then he glared fiercely at Pepita.

"Trait'ress! I believe you have had a hand in this. You have drugged me, and I will have your life!"

Making a desperate effort, he rose to his feet, and, drawing his knife, reached for the girl. She sprang up with a scream and tried to escape him, but he lurched forward and caught her by the arm. Jack darted into the room and caught his arm with one hand and smashed him full in the face with the other. The innkeeper went down, like a log, and lay motionless on the floor. Jack picked up the knife and told the old woman if she opened her mouth it would be the worse for her.

"Ah, senor, you have saved my life," said Pepita, seizing the boy's hand and pressing it to her lips. "You did not drink the coffee?" she added.

"Why, yes, I drank the second cup, after making an exchange with that rascal."

"I see! I see! How smart you are!" she cried admiringly.

"My two friends are drugged upstairs. How are we to escape?"

"I know not. Pedro and Gonzales are to be reckoned with."

At that moment there came a pounding on the door, and a shout of "Open!" in Spanish. The old woman, with an agility remarkable for her years, darted to the door and opened it. Four dark-skinned, rascally men entered. The old woman spoke to them rapidly, pointing at the boy. They drew their knives and advanced upon him.

"You are lost, senor!" cried Pepita, cowering to one side.

Jack faced the bunch with resolute mein and the knife, determined to sell his life dearly. But he was saved from a scrap by the sudden entrance of Pedro and Gonzales through the curtain. They were astonished to see Jack in an attitude of defense when they supposed he was asleep with his companions upstairs. However, they lost no time in seizing and disarming him.

"Francois, he is dead!" cried Pedro, looking down at the innkeeper.

"No, no," replied the old woman; "he is drugged!"

"Drugged! How is that?" asked the rascal, in astonishment.

"The senor tricked him somehow," she answered.

"Never mind. We have the young senor safe enough. He shall not escape us."

A general explanation took place with the newcomers, who appeared to be a part of the gang who made the inn their headquarters. The fate selected for the three boys was approved by the others, and as Pedro declared no time was to be lost, Jack was dragged outside and strapped to the back of a mule. Then the unconscious Dick and Bert were brought downstairs and tied on the other two mules. Pedro and Gonzales then started the animals ahead of them up into the mountains. During the confusion Pepita, who knew

what she had to expect when Francois recovered his senses, disappeared from the inn.

CHAPTER X.—Pepita Saves Jack and Friends.

It was a long ride through the night that Jack was forced to endure, and which his friends were blissfully unconscious of. When morning dawned they were still many miles from their destination, in a wild and desolate part of the mountains. Finally Pedro called a halt for the rest, and the mules, with their burdens, were tethered by the roadside. The two rascals took a covered basket from the back of one of the animals, sat down by a rock, and taking a bottle of wine and some meat and bread from the basket started to eat their breakfast.

The bushes, a short distance away, were cautiously parted, and a face appeared. It was the pretty countenance of Pepita. She had followed the outfit all the way from the inn in spite of the hardship it entailed upon her. She had made up her mind to save Jack, even at the risk of her life, for she felt she owed him her life, and her warm young Spanish heart was now devoted to his interests. She well understood the fate designed for him and his companions, and she resolved to save him at least from going to the copper mine.

In her hand she carried a glittering knife, and she felt no hesitation to use it in Jack's behalf if the necessity arose. Her dress and shoes were torn by the rocks and brambles she had passed over and through in her toilsome journey. Her hands and neck were scratched and bleeding, but she was pluck to the backbone. Jack, lying partly along the side of the mule, faced in the direction of the bushes, and he was astonished beyond measure when he recognized Pepita's face. That she should have followed the party such a long and toilsome trip seemed beyond his comprehension. Her presence, however, was undoubted, and his heart began to gather hope, for he knew from her movements that she was there to help him and his friends if she could.

"She has done this because I saved her life," he thought, "but what can she, a girl, do against those two rascals?"

At that moment sounds reached his ears from farther up the road. The tramp of animals and the shouting of men, evidently urging them on. Pedro and Gonzales heard the sounds, too, but did not trouble themselves to get up. They knew what was coming—a train of mules bearing a load of copper on its way to the seaport village of Dolores, fifteen miles to the north of the roadside inn. Presently the head of the train came in sight, winding out of the mouth of a ravine.

The mules were urged forward with shouts and blows, which they accepted with a stoical indifference born of long experience. When the train got abreast of the spot where Pedro and Gonzales were, those rascals got up and went forward to meet the men in charge. The train came to a stop and a pow-wow took place. Pedro and his companion explained that they were taking three boys to the mine to be sold as workers. Several of the mule-tenders came over and looked at the boys.

"Stout chaps. They'll do first rate. The overseer will be glad to get them, for we are short-handed in the mine, owing to several deaths," said the leader of the convoy.

In a few minutes the train proceeded on again. When the rear mules came up, Pedro and Gonzales recognized a particular friend and walked on about a hundred feet talking with him. Pepita seized the chance to sneak out of the bushes and glide up to the mule on the back of which Jack was a prisoner.

"Senor, I have come to save you," she said, hastily cutting his bonds with her knife.

In a few moments he slipped to the ground, free.

"Fly and hide yourself!" she urged, pulling him toward the bushes.

"No, Pepita; I can't desert my friends," he said.

"But they are drugged and can't help themselves. Quick, or you are lost."

"At least I can cut them free. Give me the knife."

"There is no time. Pedro and Gonzales have stopped and will turn back in a moment. Ah, senor, for my sake!" she pleaded. "Think what I have risked for your sake! Hide and perhaps we will find a chance to save your friends yet."

Jack allowed himself to be persuaded, and followed her into the bushes. Hardly had they disappeared when the men turned around and came back. Pedro's sharp eyes missed the form of Jack from the mule. He uttered an exclamation of consternation and surprise.

"What's the trouble?" asked Gonzales.

"One of the boys has escaped. We must recapture him. He can't be far away."

"Escaped! Caramba! Let us search."

They whipped out their knives and started into the bushes. Suddenly Pedro uttered a cry.

"Caramba! I have been hurt," and he fell to the ground, with an ugly gash in his leg which had been inflicted by a broken branch he scraped against.

Gonzales stopped.

"Injured!" he exclaimed, bending over the writhing Pedro.

"Si, in the leg. I believe that boy has a knife. Look out that you don't catch it yourself. He is hiding somewhere here, like a snake in the grass. Por Dios! I am done for as to walking farther."

As Gonzales bent down to lift his companion, a stone launched by Jack, caught him squarely on the head and he fell down, stunned. Pedro uttered a volley of imprecations. Having temporarily put their enemies out of business, Jack and Pepita emerged from the shelter of the bushes into the road.

"We will unloose the mules and drive them forward," said Pepita, "and make our escape."

"That will take us farther into the mountains and away from the coast," said Jack. "We must retrace our way along the road."

"No," said the girl. "We would have to pass the inn."

"What's the odds? It will take us nearly all day to get that far, and we can hide till it's dark and then slip past the place."

"We can go over the mountains farther on, and by following the sun, get around to Dolores; but we shall go hungry till the morning," she said.

"Never mind that. Our lives are more important than our stomachs," said Jack.

Pepita spied the basket and looking into it, said:

"Here is food and wine that will answer very well," and grabbed it up.

Jack freed the mules and started them on, after helping the girl upon the back of the one he had so lately been tied to. In a short time they had left the precious pair of rascals well behind. They followed the road for an hour before Pepita, pointing to a ravine on the left, said they must turn off there. Jack headed the forward mule into it and the other two followed, as a matter of course. They had covered perhaps a mile of uneven ground when Jack noticed a movement from Dick. He halted the little train and, getting the knife from Pepita, he cut Dick loose from the mule's back. Dick looked around in wonder.

"Hello! Where am I at?" he said, as he straightened up.

"So you've woke up at last. I'm mighty glad of it," said Jack.

"I say, what does this mean? I thought we went to sleep in a room of an inn."

"So you and Bert did, but I didn't. You two were drugged by the coffee you drank."

"Drugged!" exclaimed Dick, astonished.

"Yes," answered Jack, who in a few words explained matters to his friend.

"Gee! And where are we now?"

"Somewhere in the Andes."

"And that's the girl we saw at the inn?"

"Yes; her name is Pepita. We owe our escape from a terrible fate to her."

The girl had, during the trip so far, told Jack enough about the copper mine to make him sensible of the fortunate escape he and his friends had had through the pluck and gratitude of Pepita.

"She's a brick, then. How came she to stand in with us?"

Jack told him how he had saved the girl's life.

"Gee, but you had a great nerve, old man!"

Pepita proved to be a bad guide, for it wasn't long before they found themselves all tangled up in the mountain range. Finally they came up against a blank wall of rock that appeared to be a regular cul de sac.

"We're stuck here for fair," said Dick. "We'll have to turn around and go back till we can find a place to branch off. If we don't get out of this wilderness, we are likely to leave our bones here."

"That would be hard luck," said Jack.

He started to turn the mule he was leading, on the back of which Pepita rode, when the animal, backing accidentally into a mass of tall, thick bushes, slipped and disappeared. Pepita uttered a scream as she vanished, too.

"Good heavens!" gasped Jack, parting the bushes carefully and looking ahead.

He found himself looking into a narrow, cleft-like opening in the rock, the interior of which was as black as ink.

CHAPTER XI.—The Hidden Valley.

"Madre mio! Save me, Senor Jack!" he heard Pepita crying from the depths of this tunnel.

"Wait for me, fellows. I'm going after Pe-

pita," said Jack. "Look out for yourself!" cried Jack warningly. "You may fall into a hole."

"Where are you, Pepita?" called Jack, as he pushed forward in the dark.

"Here, Senor Jack!" came from a short distance.

She appeared to be less alarmed than at first, for the mule had stopped backing and she knew that Jack, in whom she had all confidence, was coming to her aid.

It only took Jack a minute to reach her, and he seized her by the arm in the dark to reassure her.

"This is a funny hole in the wall," he said. "I wonder where it leads to?"

"Let us get out at once," she said.

"Hold on a moment. I wish I had a match."

"I have some in my pocket," she said.

"Good! Hand them over."

He struck one and looked around the tunnel. He saw that it led off sharply to the left, and that the mule had backed up against the end wall of the passage. Jack's curiosity was aroused and he determined to see where the cross tunnel led to.

"You won't mind waiting in the dark till I come back, Pepita," he said.

"Where are you going?" she asked.

"There's a second passage behind you, and I'm going to find out, if I can, where it runs to."

"You might fall into a rift in the rocks," she said anxiously.

"Not while I've matches to light my way," he replied.

He started ahead and found that the cross tunnel inclined down like the other. The floor was comparatively smooth, though it was littered with many small stones. As he went on he saw that it wound around in a gentle curve.

Jack went on for some distance till he began to wonder if he was descending into the bowels of the Andes, and then he suddenly came into a lighted cave. Looking out of the opening, he gazed upon one of the most wonderful valleys his mind could conceive when considering that the mountain scenery he had heretofore met with since leaving the wreck was all of the most desolate and sterile character. This valley was like a veritable Eden. The grass was soft and green, flowers grew in profusion, and trees sprang up in all directions. That some of the trees bore fruit he had evidence close by.

The whole valley was surrounded by the great spurs of the Andes, rising in serried battalions toward the sky. The place resembled nothing so much as a vast natural amphitheater. The temperature was hot, owing to its enclosed character and exposure to the direct rays of the tropical sun, which at that moment hung almost directly overhead. Taken all in all, it was a strikingly beautiful scene, and Jack was in no hurry to retrace his steps through the dark tunnels that connected it with the cul de sac above. The fruit attracted him, for he was hungry.

He climbed the nearest tree and found it contained the most luscious figs he had ever eaten. He had always believed that the figs grown in Santa Clara Valley, near his home in San Jose, could not be surpassed, but he had to take off his hat to these. He ate several, and then not only filled his pockets with them to carry back

to his friends, but also his hat. Finally he re-entered the cave and looked around there. To his surprise he saw a large chest standing against the wall and near by was a rifle. Beside the rifle were two revolvers in holsters. There was also a small, black, three-legged pot with a handle and several tin pans, such as miners used in washing surface dirt for gold. Jack appropriated the revolvers and strapped them around his waist, then, full of his discoveries, he started back up the winding incline. He went up much faster than he came down, for he knew the way was clear and that no offshoots were there to lead him astray.

Presently he heard voices ahead, which he recognized as Dick's and Pepita's. The former was fruitlessly hurling questions in English at the girl, and she was talking back to him in Spanish. Neither understood the other, but both were somewhat excited over Jack's continued absence.

"Hello!" said Jack, coming up to them and the mule. "What are you trying to do, Dick?"

Pepita uttered a little shriek of joy on hearing Jack's voice, while Dick said:

"Where in thunder have you been, old man?"

"Where I'm going to take the bunch of you. See if you can turn the mule around into this cross tunnel without breaking his neck," said Jack, striking a match.

The feat was accomplished with some difficulty. Then Jack led the way and his friends followed close on the sound of the footfalls of his mule, which echoed through the passages. Dick and Bert were wondering where the tunnels were going to end, when the party emerged into the lighted cave. Jack lifted Pepita down, and her heart thrilled as he held her momentarily in his arms. Already she was head over heels in love with the young American senor, who had saved her life, and had she dared she would have thrown her arms around his neck and kissed him more than once.

"Come and see the beautiful valley," said Dick to his friends, leading the girl to the entrance of the cave.

They left the mules standing in the cave, and were delightfully surprised by the fertile valley the moment their eyes rested on it.

"There's the fig tree," said Jack, pointing at it.

Then the sight of the grass reminded him that the mules were entitled to some consideration, so he brought them out, and the animals began an eager feast.

"What do you think of this hidden valley?" asked Jack.

"It's a dandy," said Dick.

"I dare say there are other exits from it, but if there are not, we can return quite safely by the route we came. Before we leave it we'll load the mules with enough food, and a supply of grass for themselves, to last us for a week while trying to find our way out of the mountain range."

The sun was so hot that they were glad to beat a retreat to the cool cave, where Jack pointed out the chest, the rifle, and other things.

"There must be somebody hanging out here," said Dick.

The key stood in the lock of the chest, and Dick took the liberty of opening it to see what it contained. It held clothes and many other things.

There were several books printed in English, so the boys judged that the owner of the chest was either an American or an Englishman. Jack, who had had no sleep all night, and Pepita, who had also been awake, began to feel the effect of their long spell of wakefulness. They lay down and went right off to sleep, leaving Dick and Bert to do likewise if they chose. They slept till aroused by Dick, about dark.

"Listen," said Dick. "There's evidence that we are not alone in this valley."

Jack listened. Through the calm evening air came the strident barking of more than one dog.

CHAPTER XII.—The Wild Man and His Dogs.

As the barking of the dogs came from one spot all the time, the boys guessed there was a house in the valley, or perhaps several houses, for that matter. It was impossible for them to make out just what was in the valley beyond the trees and vegetation that they saw on every side.

"We'll take a ride around the place in the morning," said Jack, "and if there are inhabitants here we'll introduce ourselves."

They made their evening meal on a small part of the remaining meat and bread, with the figs to fill up on. Sitting at the mouth of the cave, they talked for an hour or so, and then turned in for a sleep inside. Jack was the first to awake, and he made a further examination of the immediate vicinity of the cave. He not only discovered more fig trees, but other fruit of a tropical nature. He brought all he could carry to the cave, and all hands had some of it for breakfast.

"Now we'll make a start to explore the valley," said Jack. "I guess I'll take that flask of whisky that I saw in the chest. It might come in handy."

Dick took possession of the Remington rifle and put a handful of cartridges in his pocket. As there were but three mules for the four of them, one would have to walk, so the boys decided to take turns afoot. Jack said he'd do the first spell of walking, and started off beside Pepita. Dick and Bert followed after on the two mules. It was decided to circle the edge of the valley first, and this they did. They met with no evidences of human beings at any point, nor did they find any means of exit from the valley other than the underground way by which they had got there.

"This is certainly a hidden valley," said Jack. "We only got into it by the merest accident. No one would have thought there was an opening behind those bushes in the cul de sac. If the mule hadn't butted into it, we never would have learned there was a luxurious place like this close at hand, in the midst of the Andes. It will be something for us to talk about when we get back to California."

"And when we get back to our homes we'll be sent to school again," said Dick.

"Well, what's the difference? We've discovered that there are worse things in the world than the Rev. White's academy. Just the same, I shall put up a stiff kick against returning there. There are lots of other schools where a fellow can get an education without being forced to work half the time for the benefit of the head of the estab-

ishment. I guess my mother didn't know the kind of school it was, and I'm pretty certain that the letter I sent her telling what I was up against were suppressed by the reverend principal, so she never got an idea of the truth."

"I guess your stepfather knew the character of the school, all right," said Dick, "and sent you there on purpose to make you hoe a hard row. I am satisfied that my stepmother selected the school for me for the same reason."

"Well, as it goes against my grain to let my stepfather get the better of me, like he has my mother, if I decide to return home, I'll show him that I've grown independent of him since I've been out in the world. Nothing like rubbing up against the rough edges of things to make a man of a fellow. You ought to feel able now to handle your stepmother."

"I don't think she'll be able to order me around as she used to," said Dick.

"Bert has the worst of the deal, as his guardian has complete legal control over him, and all the kicking in the world won't do him any good. I'm afraid that individual intends to skin Bert out of the legacy his mother left him."

"It looks that way," said Dick. "He ought to complain to the judge of the court."

"That won't do him much good. He'd have to show some proof that his guardian was trying to defraud him. How is he going to do it?"

"I couldn't tell you."

They went completely around the valley and finally got back to the cave. The heat was so great that they determined to postpone further investigations until the sun went down below the mountain peaks. They rested in the cave, had dinner, finishing up the last of the bread and meat and filling up on fruit. The rest of the afternoon was passed in talking and sleeping. Jack woke up about five and found Dick looking over the things in the chest.

"I guess the party who owns this stuff has gone away and left it," said Dick, "otherwise we ought to have seen him around."

"I don't see why he should leave his rifle and revolvers, even if he temporarily abandoned his other property," responded Jack.

"If he's working somewhere around the valley the place isn't so big that he couldn't get back here every night."

"He might be stopping over where we heard the dogs yelping last night."

"Well, let's go over and see."

"All right. We'll leave Bert and Pepita to finish their sleep. We are not likely to be long away."

Mounting a mule each, they started for the center of the valley, Dick carrying the rifle as a precaution. After a short ride they came out in a kind of clearing, the most conspicuous feature of which was a huge rock, rising a matter of a dozen feet and spreading twice that distance to the right and left. As they approached the rock they saw the form of a man stretched out on the ground, with his head and shoulders supported by a large stone.

"There's our man now," said Jack. "There's something the matter with him."

"Perhaps he's dead," said Dick.

They dismounted and advanced toward the motionless figure. He was a tall, stalwart man, well

along in years. His eyes were closed, and his face was deathly white.

"He's dead," said Dick.

"No, he isn't. If he was, his eyes would be open and his mouth, too," said Jack.

"Well, he's next door to it. Hello! What are those glittering things on that paper beside him? They look like real diamonds."

"No, he isn't. If he was his eyes would be open and his eyes."

"Water—water!" he gasped.

"He wants water, and we haven't any with us," said Jack.

"Give him some of that whisky you have in the flask. It doubtless belongs to him," said Dick.

As Jack placed the flask to the old man's lips, Dick uttered an ejaculation of alarm.

"Look!" he cried, pointing.

Jack turned and saw a sight that took away his breath—a fierce-looking man about to release two vicious dogs. Jack released the flask which the old man had seized with both his hands, sprang up, and drew one of his revolvers.

Dick, at the same time, grabbed up the rifle and cocked it.

"Aha!" cried the half-clad apparition at the opening of the rock, in Spanish. "More victims for us. At them, good dogs!"

The animals sprang at the boys, looking as if they meant to rend them in bits. And they were able to do it, too, for they were large and powerful. Crack! crack! Jack and Dick fired at the same instant, and the dogs fell and rolled over, one with a rifle ball in its brain, the other badly wounded by a revolver bullet. The wild-looking man uttered a snarl of rage. He grabbed a spear standing within reach and flung it straight at Jack. The boy barely avoided it by springing quickly aside. As the man reached for a second spear Jack fired at him. The ball cut a furrow alongside his head and he dropped unconscious. The old man appeared to understand what was going on, though he did not see the dogs nor the wild man. The animal Jack had wounded was tearing around in the grass, frothing at the mouth, and it looked as if he had got his death-blow.

"Keep watch, Dick, and see that nothing more comes at us out of that rock," said Jack, kneeling again beside the old man. "How are you feeling, sir?" he asked.

"Badly," replied the old chap, in a hoarse whisper. "If I live an hour, I shall do well. How came you boys to find your way into this hidden valley?"

"By accident. One of our mules backed into the entrance of the tunnel above, and curious to find out where it led to, I followed it down to the cave," answered the boy.

"Ah, yes, I see. You have come in time to do me a last service. Have you shot those dogs?"

"Yes."

"And the man, too?"

"Yes. I had to shoot him in self-defense."

"You have done a good job. He is a fiend in human shape, and his dogs were like him. They have done for me, and would have finished me, but their master preferred I should die a lingering death by the heat of the sun. What I have suffered this day no one can guess, nor could I

myself tell its subtle torture, but the end is near and I will soon be out of my misery."

"Are you really so bad as that?"

"Yes. What's your name, my lad?"

"Jack Riddle. My companion's name is Dick Thompson. There is another boy with us at the cave named Bert Dixon, and a Spanish girl, Pepita by name. Are those your things in the cave?"

"Yes. And I give them to you lads to take away with you if you can or care to."

"Then it was your rifle that killed one of the dogs; my companion has it. And one of your revolvers with which I laid out the other dog and the man."

"I'm glad to hear it."

"I suppose you got into the valley by accident yourself?"

"I did in a way, but I came here to find this wonderful valley and secure its treasure of diamonds."

"A treasure of diamonds!" exclaimed Jack. "Those beside you are some of them, then?"

"Yes. Listen. The diamonds, which are said to be worth a million dollars and are all roughly separated from their outer crust by a rude method known to the natives, were brought here from the mines of Brazil and hidden in that cave in the rock out of which came the man and his dogs, who in some way became their guardian and protector. My name is Jeremiah Trundle, and I'm an Englishman. I learned of this valley and the existence of the diamond treasure through a man who tried unsuccessfully to locate the place, and who told me the story on his death bed. How he learned about it he did not tell me. Indeed, he had but little time to tell me anything, but, nevertheless, I got enough from him to excite a strong desire to take up the hunt where he left off."

The old man paused and took another swallow of the whisky to revive his failing strength.

"I will not tell all I went through trying to find this valley. Enough that I did find it, as my presence here testifies. Then I lost no time in looking for the place where the diamonds were hidden. After several days' search that rock attracted my notice, and I decided I had hit upon the spot. That was yesterday, so you see I have not been here long. Had you preceded me, doubtless your lacerated remains would now strew this spot, as I supposed you were unprovided with weapons until you found mine, which I was a fool to leave in the cave, but I fancied the valley was untenanted save by myself."

"Yes, sir, the dogs would have done us up if we were unarmed," admitted Jack.

The old man nodded feebly after taking another drink.

"Late yesterday I was sitting in the grass watching the rock and speculating as to where I should dig," he went on, "when, to my amazement, a part of the rock, in the shape of a door, swung outward, and that human fiend came forth leading two dogs. He started off with them in a direction opposite to where I was and disappeared. I immediately guessed that the diamonds were inside the rock, and I determined to try and secure some, at least before he got back, or at least satisfy myself that the diamonds were there."

"You entered the rock, then?"

"I did, and found an earthen vessel filled with diamonds similar to those beside me. I exulted at my success, and determined to carry away with me as many as I could, and make a second attempt at another time. But it was not to be. Fate was against me. The man and his dogs returned and caught me. He flew into a terrible rage, cursed me and set the dogs on me. They fastened their fangs in my legs and tore me cruelly. I saw I had no chance against the savage beasts, and looked for a quick death. But that was denied me."

"He called the dogs off, and left me to suffer in agony all night long. In the morning he set the dogs on me again, but as soon as they had given me another lacerating he called them off. Then he carried me outside and laid me down here. With a malignant laugh he placed those diamonds you see beside me that I might see them in my dying agony. Then followed a day of torture in the sun, and then—you came along."

He paused and appeared to be quite spent. The dew of death gathered on his forehead, and he began to mutter incoherent words. Jack tried to take the flask from his fingers to give him another drink, but he clutched it so tightly that the boy was unable to accomplish his object. By this time the wounded dog had succumbed, and was dead near its companion. Jack stepped up to the savage man and looked at him. He was seemingly far from being dead.

"Get a rope from the nearest mule," said Jack to Dick. "We must tie him, otherwise when he recovers he is likely to hurt us if we were not watching him closely. In any case, he must be secured so that he cannot prevent us getting at the diamonds."

Dick got the rope and they tied the man, but he looked so powerful that Jack doubted if any ordinary rope would hold him long. They went back to look at Jeremiah Trundle. His glazed eyes and dropping jaw showed that his troubles were at an end in this world. He had died without giving a sign.

CHAPTER XIII.—A Million in Diamonds.

"Poor fellow, all is over with him!" said Jack.

Dick gazed solemnly at the corpse, and said nothing.

"Now for the diamonds," said Jack. "Put that bunch of them in your pocket."

Dick did so, and followed Jack into the cave. A flight of stone steps led downward a dozen feet into a cave illuminated by a stone vessel containing an oily substance on which floated a kind of taper. It was not a bright light, but it answered well enough to make objects visible. In one corner was the wild man's cot, simply a bed of dried grass. Near by was a pile of freshly gathered fruit and a bowl of powdered maize from which he made round cakes, like thin fishballs, a few samples of which stood near it. There was also a pile of stones, about the size of marbles, with which the man probably amused himself, for their utility was not apparent.

There were other things of no great importance. In another corner stood the earthen vessel of diamonds. There was quite a quantity of

the stones, all bereft of their outside covering and all looking like gems that would cut to from three carats upward to ten. They had been roughly polished, just enough to display their brilliancy. A person with no great knowledge of diamonds would have said this collection was a great find.

"We're in luck," said Jack. "There are diamonds enough here to make us all rich. Bert can let his guardian go bag, and you and I can put on a little style with our folks."

"That's right, old man. Things have evidently come our way at last," nodded Dick.

"Well, lend me a hand and we'll get this vessel of diamonds out of here and over to the mules. We can dump it into the panniers, and take our find to the cave to astonish our two friends there."

They found the vessel hard to lift and awkward to carry, so it was decided to bring the panniers and empty the diamonds into them. Dick remained on watch while Jack went over to the mules. The wild man was still unconscious. In a few minutes Jack returned to the cave with the panniers, the diamonds were scooped into them and then they left the cave with their rich burdens. After placing the panniers on the mule, Dick asked Jack what they were to do with the wild man.

"Nothing. I'll gamble on it he'll get free of his own accord; that rope never will hold him," answered Jack.

"Then he's sure to give us trouble. He'll come to the cave and murder us all in our sleep."

"I don't mean to give him the chance. Now that we have secured a big treasure, I propose that we leave the valley at once and find our way to Dolores."

Dick agreed that would be the right thing to do.

"Now, we'll carry the old man over here and bury him in that hole in the rocks. After we shove him in, we'll fill the mouth of the hole with stone. He will be buried as well as if placed in an expensive tomb," said Jack.

That sad duty was soon finished, and then they led the mules toward the cave. When they got back to the cave they found Bert and Pepita impatiently awaiting them.

"We have a great story to tell you, Bert," said Jack, "but as the sun is almost down it must keep, for we've got to leave the valley right away. We must gather enough fruit to last us twice as long as we expect to be on the road."

"What's the rush?" said Bert. "I wouldn't mind staying here a couple of days more for a rest."

"You'll do your resting somewhere else. It is necessary that we leave."

Perceiving that Jack had some good reason for getting away from the hidden valley, Bert said no more. The three started in to gather a supply of food. It was dark by the time all the preparations were made. Jack took the lead with Pepita, as usual, and the little party started up through the underground watercourse to the cul de sac. Passing out through the bushes, they started back over their former route looking for a place to branch off toward Dolores. During the first part of the trip Dick told Bert, and Jack told Pepita, the adventure they had met with in

the valley which led to the discovery of a fortune in diamonds. Of course, they were both astonished, and asked many questions on the subject.

"When we reach Dolores you will take a vessel for Guayaquil," said Pepita, in a sorrowful tone.

"Yes. We intend to get away from this country as soon as we can," said Jack.

"And what is to become of me if you desert me, Senor Jack?" she said.

"Desert you—never! You are to come with us, if you will, all the way to California."

"You mean that, Senor Jack?" she said, in a glad tone.

"Certainly I mean it. You are willing to go, aren't you?"

"I will go anywhere with you, Jack. I could not live away from you."

"Do you think so much of me as all that?"

The answer the girl returned showed Jack that Pepita loved him dearer than anything in all the world. They traveled some distance before they struck a trail that led downward through the range, and they followed it till the sun rose. Then they stopped, took refuge in a ravine, and passed the greater part of the day in sleep. They resumed their journey about sundown and traveled all night. Although the cul de sac was but a day and a half's journey in a straight line from Dolores, it took the little party nearly a week to pick their way through the wilds of the lower Andes to the road that circled the inn. They reached it five or six miles from that hostelry on the way to the seaport village where the copper from the mine was shipped to Guayaquil. Pepita said there was an inn ahead, but would not advise them to stop there, for though the people who kept it were not anywhere near as bad as Francois of the mountain inn and his associates, yet if they discovered that the party had a fortune in diamonds with them they would never leave the inn alive.

"Then we won't stop there, but camp in the woods this side of it," said Jack.

This they did, and passed the day in sight of the road, but concealed from any one traveling upon it.

"We'll reach Dolores in the morning, Pepita says," Jack told his friends. "By selling the mules we ought to raise enough money to pay our way on some small craft to Guayaquil, which, as I recollect my geography, is situated on a north indentation of the Gulf of Guayaquil."

"I hope so," said Dick; "but how are we going to carry the diamonds so that no one will get on to them?"

"We must put up at the inn in Dolores and carry the panniers to our room, the one you, I and Bert will occupy. Then we must get a number of small bags and fill them with the diamonds, sewing up the ends. Six bags will do, and we will each carry two of them. We'll keep a few loose ones in our pockets to sell at Guayaquil in order to raise funds to carry us back to California."

Jack's plan was considered a good one, and it was duly carried out after they reached the village, which they did on the following morning. Jack made arrangements for two rooms at the inn, which was a rude kind of a public house, and for meals while they remained at Dolores. The

proprietor told him where he could dispose of the mules, and he lost no time in disposing of them at the best price he could get. After the midday meal Jack started out to look up a sailing craft, leaving Pepita and his two friends together to put the diamonds in the bags he had procured. He found several small vessels in the little harbor, but their skippers would not consent to taking passengers at any price.

CHAPTER XIV.—Conclusion.

When Jack told Pepita, she suggested that he speak to the proprietor of the inn. So he looked up the innkeeper and put the matter up to him.

"If you are willing to hire a small boat with the owner and one or two men to take you to Guayaquil, I can find you the man," said the innkeeper.

"All right," said Jack. "Send for him."

In the course of an hour the man appeared and was sent up to the rooms where the young people were passing the afternoon. He was a rascally-looking fellow, and neither the boys nor Pepita fancied him a bit.

"What kind of a craft have you?" Jack asked.

"Ah, senor, she is a very fine boat," said the man, twirling his greasy hat in his hands. "You will be much satisfied with her."

"What are you going to charge us for the passage?"

The man hesitated, sized up the bunch, and named a figure.

"Too much," said Jack, "unless you wait for part of your money till we reach Guayaquil."

"How much you pay down?"

Jack figured what it would cost to settle their inn bill if they left about dark, after supper, and then told him.

The skipper hesitated and asked for some security.

"I've got a rough diamond," said Jack, fishing one out of his pocket. "You can hold that till you get the rest."

The man's eyes glistened when he looked at it.

Jack completed arrangements with him to sail at dark, and the fellow went away.

After supper Jack settled with the innkeeper and the party boarded the boat. It had only a single mast, with a big sail, something like a small Italian coasting craft, and was open clear forward to within three feet of the bow. It was a dirty boat, too, but the young people were prepared to take pot luck. After they set sail Jack handed the skipper the diamond, or rather another stone of about the same size. The rascal had sharp eyes and a clear recollection, and he knew it wasn't the same stone.

"Ah, senor, you have more than one diamond, I see!"

The skipper leered, put it in his pocket, and said nothing more. The night was clear and the stars shone out brilliantly as the sailboat skimmed over the water close in to the coast. The skipper had a crew of two with him, and they looked as wicked as himself. The three sat aft, talking together in low tones and watching their passengers, who were huddled together forward. The hours went by and the little party dropped off to sleep, with the exception of Jack, who believed,

from Pepita's warning, that the skipper was not to be trusted. It was well that he was thus wary, for about three in the morning the skipper, supposing the passengers to all be asleep, started forward with one of his men, intending to do up the entire party, rob them of what they had, and pitch their bodies overboard.

"Halt!" cried Jack, starting up. "What do you want over here?"

The skipper was taken aback, but not anticipating any effectual resistance on the part of his victims, he drew his knife and dashed at Jack, the other following. Jack raised his hand, there was a flash and a report, and the skipper fell back. The other man, with a cry of alarm, started back, lost his balance, and pitched sidewise into the sea and disappeared from view. The man at the helm started up with a cry and moved the tiller to bring the boat around, but Jack covered him with the revolver and ordered him to keep on, which he sullenly did.

The report of the revolver awoke Dick, Bert and Pepita, and Jack explained to them what had happened. Finding the skipper was wounded, Jack recovered his diamond from his pocket, and leaving Dick on watch, took a nap himself. The boat reached Guayaquil on the following afternoon.

Jack told the other survivor of the boat's company that he would pay him the passage money and he could do what he pleased with it.

This he did, after raising some funds by the sale of two of the diamonds, which fetched him about \$500 in silver, and the fellow, instead of returning to Dolores, started farther up the coast, intending to sell the boat at some port where the transaction would not leak out.

Jack secured passage for his party to Panama. On their arrival they bought a new outfit of clothes all around, and then Jack registered them at a hotel to await the sailing of the next steamer for San Francisco.

They were detained about a week, and during that time they lived on the fat of the land and enjoyed themselves immensely.

During that week Jack made the acquaintance of a diamond dealer, and to him he sold a bunch of the gems, receiving \$50,000, which he turned into a draft to take with him to California. Ten days later the party landed in San Francisco. Then Jack started to dispose of his diamonds.

A conservative value of his whole stock was one million in gold.

A syndicate of diamond men took the lot at that figure, and the sale attracted so much notice that the newspapers interviewed the boys and printed their story.

The money was equally divided, a quarter of a million apiece, Pepita getting as much as each of the boys.

The boys then went home and made peace with their families.

In the end Pepita combined her fortune with Jack's when they were married, on which happy occasion there was a reunion of the four who came in possession of the treasure of the hidden valley.

Next week's issue will contain "SAM, THE SPECULATOR; or, PLAYING THE WALL STREET MARKET."

CURRENT NEWS

WANTS \$10,000 FOR THE LOSS OF FINGER.

Ten thousand dollars for the loss of the middle finger on his left hand is asked by John Matheys, Wausaukee, of John McVey, also of Wausaukee, in Circuit Court, Green Bay, Wis. The complainant alleges that during a saloon brawl Armistice Day, the defendant chewed his finger. Blood poison set in which necessitated amputation of the injured member.

X-RAY SHOWS TOOTH IN LUNG.

An X-ray photograph of James B. Broad, controller of the E. I. du Pont de Nemours Company, Wilmington, who is in a critical condition at a local hospital, showed that the cause of his illness was the lodgment of a tooth in his lungs, attending physicians announced the other day. They say Mr. Broad had four teeth extracted several weeks ago, taking gas for the operation, and they believe that one of the extracted teeth accidentally slipped down the windpipe.

The physicians assert that unless an operation is performed at once Mr. Broad cannot recover, while, on the other hand, it is feared an operation may prove fatal, as the patient is extremely weak.

TREE ON TWO FARMS.

A beech tree on a hillside in Owen County, two miles west of Whitehall, which marks the center of population of the United States for 1920, has been found to be owned by F. B. Robertson of Spencer, Ind., and Jacob Rankin, a farmer in Owen County.

At the time Prof. W. A. Cogshall, head of the astronomy department of Indiana University, computed the center of population, the land on which the tree stood was supposed to belong to Melvin Simms, a farmer living near the place.

The spot was visited by Mr. Simms one day recently, however, and he said that the tree separated the farm of Rankin from a plot of land owned by Robertson and that the tree was twenty-five rods from the east and west boundary of his farm.

BURGLARS STRIP TWIN TOWERS OF NOTRE DAME.

Some enterprising burglars stole the lightning conductors from the twin towers of Notre Dame Cathedral the other day. How they did it and got away with their booty is a mystery, but why they did it is explained by the fact that the lightning conductors were each topped with 200 grams of platinum, which at present would bring something like 14,000 francs. They also removed a considerable weight of copper.

There is an old saying in Paris about stealing the towers of Notre Dame, but this is the first time anything like it has ever been attempted.

The burglars, according to the guardians' theory, must have passed the night in the towers, hiding themselves in some corner when the keep-

ers made their rounds after the last visitor was supposed to have left. Even then they had to force several doors in order to reach the top.

Their work shows that they were not amateurs and must have been something of steeplejacks, for the lightning conductors overtop the towers by 10 or 15 feet. When removing the platinum, therefore, the burglars must have had only a precarious hold on the slender rods, which, standing at the corners of the towers, added the peril to the enterprise of a drop to the pavement several hundred feet below.

As no trace of the thieves has been found, the presumption is that they waited with their booty until some group of visitors was leaving next day and quietly walked out with them.

U. S. POPULATION PUT AT 105,708,771 BY CERTIFIED COUNT.

The population of the United States on January 1 this year, as enumerated in the Fourteenth Census, was 105,708,771, as announced to-day by the Census Bureau for certification to Congress as the basis for reapportionment of the members of the House of Representatives from the various states. The population with outlying possessions is 117,857,509.

These are the final population figures of the country and states, the statistics announced early in October having been the preliminary compilations. The population of the states is as follows:

Alabama, 2,348,174; Arizona, 333,903; Arkansas, 1,752,204; California, 3,426,861; Colorado, 939,629; Connecticut, 1,380,631; Delaware, 223,003; District of Columbia, 437,471.

Florida, 968,470; Georgia, 2,895,832; Idaho, 431,866; Illinois, 6,485,280; Indiana, 2,930,390; Iowa, 2,404,021; Kansas, 1,769,257; Kentucky, 2,416,630; Louisiana, 7,798,509; Maine, 768,014; Maryland, 1,449,661; Massachusetts, 3,852,356; Michigan, 3,668,412; Minnesota, 2,387,125; Mississippi, 1,790,618; Missouri, 3,404,055; Montana, 548,889; Nebraska, 1,295,372; Nevada, 77,407; New Hampshire, 443,083; New Jersey, 3,155,900; New Mexico, 360,350; New York, 10,384,829; North Carolina, 2,559,123.

North Dakota, 645,680; Ohio, 5,759,394; Oklahoma, 2,028,283; Oregon, 783,389; Pennsylvania, 8,720,017; Rhode Island, 604,397; South Carolina, 1,683,724; South Dakota, 636,547; Tennessee, 2,337,885; Texas, 4,663,228; Utah, 449,396; Vermont, 352,428; Virginia, 2,309,187; Washington, 1,356,621; West Virginia, 1,463,701; Wisconsin, 2,632,067, and Wyoming, 194,402.

The population of the outlying possessions total 12,148,738. These possessions are:

Alaska, 54,899; American Samoa, 8,056; Guam, 13,275; Hawaii, 255,912; Panama Canal Zone, 22,858; Porto Rico, 1,299,809; military and naval service abroad, 117,238; Philippine Islands, 10,350,640, and Virgin Islands of the United States, 26,051.

The population of continental United States as announced to-day shows a gain of 25,663 over the preliminary figures announced October 7.

A Lawyer At Nineteen

—OR—

FIGHTING AGAINST A FRAUD

By GASTON GARNE

(A Serial Story)

CHAPTER VII.—(Continued.)

Lew backed away from the scaffolding and looked up to see if anybody was standing near to where the pail had fallen from, but all the workmen on the boards were at least twenty feet away. He could see that the pail had been resting on a single plank, and reasoned the matter out that anybody standing underneath it could have dislodged it with a push of a walking cane or an umbrella, and he came to the conclusion that it had been tumbled down upon him in some such way.

He felt convinced that it had been intentionally dislodged from its resting-place with the idea of injuring him, and feeling that he was probably in the presence of enemies, he made up his mind to go back to the courtroom and run no further risks.

He entered the courtroom, sat down, and waited for the Winslow case to be called, looking around him meanwhile to see if he could again see the man he thought he had recognized, but in vain.

A few minutes later the Winslow case was called, and both sides answered ready. Then the names of the jurymen were called one by one by the clerk, and the twelve men took their seats.

Lew eyed each man closely as he took his seat, but could see nothing suspicious in the countenance of any one of them. Both he and Sniffen examined the jury carefully, each objected to two jurors, the box was again filled, the fresh jurymen examined, and then both sides declared themselves satisfied.

But all the time Lew was wondering if the man called Bill had managed to get on that jury.

Sniffen opened his case, telling the court and jury how his client had been injured by the carelessness of the servant of the trolley company who was in charge of the car from which she had been thrown, and then described at great length the injury to the woman's nervous system, which, he said, had made her a miserable wreck, and which expert medical testimony would prove to be both progressive and permanent.

Then Mrs. Winslow, tottering as she walked, and leaning on the arm of one of the court officers, was conducted to the stand, sworn, and in feeble accents began to tell her sad story.

She had not said twenty words, when one of the jurors sneezed, and at the sound Lew turned around and fixed his eyes on the jury box. The man sneezed three times, and there could be no mistake about that peculiar hissing sound, such as not one human being in a thousand would make in such a case.

"One moment, your Honor," said Lew, stepping forward to the rail and looking up to the

judge. "I have reason to believe that one of the jurors has been approached before coming into court."

The judge rapped with his gavel, suspending proceedings.

"Which juror do you suspect, counsellor?" he asked.

"Number four, your Honor."

"What are the circumstances that have come to your knowledge?"

Lew told him of the conversation that he had unintentionally overheard in the corridor, and the identification of the man by his peculiar hissing sort of sneeze, and the judge at once ordered juror number four to stand up.

The man did so, his face alternately paling and flushing, and presenting all the signs of apprehension and guilt, and the judge told him of the charge that had been made against him. The fellow hesitated and stammered, and at last blurted out that it was true that some unknown man had approached him in the corridor, a man he knew by sight, but not by name, and had offered him money to influence a verdict in some unknown case, and that he had appeared to entertain the proposition in order to lead the briber on and ultimately cause his arrest, but that the fellow had suddenly become alarmed and left him.

It was lamely and stammeringly said, and nobody believed the juror as he made his explanation, and after finding out from him that the man who offered the bribe was not in court, the judge pronounced the case a mistrial and adjourned it for four days.

"What do you think of that?" disgustedly said Sniffen to Morgan Drake, as they walked out of court.

"I think that it means that we've got three days ahead of us in which to dispose of that sharp young lawyer," responded Drake, "and that will be more than enough time for us. He's dangerous and we must get him out of the way, and that's settled."

When Lew left the court he went straight to the office and placed his papers in the safe, and then made a call on John Scribner. The old lawyer was in bed and eagerly asked the course of the Winslow case.

Lew told him just what had occurred in the corridor and in the courtroom, and the sick man looked grave.

"You did right, of course," he said, "but it is unfortunate that matters happened as they did, for you were in a position to smash their case and send the conspirators to jail, and this postponement will give them a chance to do some crooked work. We are fighting a fraud, Lew, of that there is no doubt, and if the case could have been tried to-day we would have come out on top, but this delay may hurt us. There is no doubt in my mind that you are being watched by some of the gang, and I am quite sure that you were not hit in the corridor by accident. Those fellows are afraid of you, and if they knew what you had in store for them it is probable that they would murder you, for I believe them capable of even that. I should advise you to apply to the police for protection until this case is settled."

(To be continued)

THE NEWS IN SHORT ARTICLES

INDIAN TRIBE INCREASES.

Statistics purporting to show that the Indians are a dying race do not find confirmation in the report of Carl F. Mayer, superintendent of the Quapaw Indian tribe, who says that the tribe, composed of 236 men, women and children twenty-four years ago, when the Government assumed their guardianship, now has a roster of 322 names.

FOUGHT A BUCK DEER.

James Snook, of San Francisco, had an exciting experience with a buck deer at Occidental, in Marin County, Cal. Snook was out hunting alone, and sighting the animal, fired two shots. The deer fell, and thinking that it was dead Snook ran up to his prize. To his surprise the apparently dead animal jumped up and rushed at him viciously. Before he could protect himself Snook was knocked down and trampled into insensibility. He finally recovered, and upon staggering to his feet discovered the deer lying dead not more than two hundred yards away. Snook sustained a fracture of two ribs by being struck by the deer's horns when he was first thrown to the ground. In addition he was considerably bruised by the animals hoofs.

INNOCENT, SHE DIES IN JAIL.

Sarah Wyckoff, seventy-six years old, died in the State Prison, Raleigh, N. C., after forty-two years' imprisonment, during which she five times declined a pardon at the hands of as many Governors and after she had lived to learn that a deathbed confession had completely exonerated her of the charges for which she was sentenced.

Forty-two years ago Sarah Wyckoff entered the State Prison to serve a life sentence as the convicted accomplice in the murder of her husband, Wesley Wyckoff, in Alexander County, in the mountains of North Carolina. The convicted principal, a negro, was hanged. Three years ago from the mountains came word that a deathbed confession had absolved the woman of connection with the tragedy.

Then, for the fifth time, she refused a pardon, explaining that she was being treated well, that time had shattered all her relations with her family in the mountains and that she preferred to spend her last days amid surroundings she had learned to know so well.

HOW CANDLES ARE MADE

The wick is to the candle what the burner is to gas, according to a writer in a recent English trade bulletin. In the manufacture of candles the wick has always received considerable attention. This was true before the year 1820, when the wick was made of twisted cotton yarn. With this type of wick, the charred and glowing end required the services of a snuffer.

Braided or plaited wicks were introduced about 1825, and the snuffer became an ornamental accessory, as it was no longer a matter of necessity, as formerly.

Modern wicks go through a regular pickling process before the candle manufacturer uses them. The wick is soaked in a solution of certain chemicals, ammonium phosphate, potassium chloride and sal ammoniac being among those used. The object is to prevent the wick from smoking, and also to retard the combustion of the cotton. After the pickling the wicks are slowly dried and are then ready for coating.

Manufactured candles are of many types, but the molded candle in more or less universal household use is usually composed of a mixture of stearine and paraffin wax. The molding machine is merely a development of the idea of the old candle mold which at one time formed part of the regular equipment of every household, in the days when candles, like soap, were made at home. The modern molding machine consists of a series of molds in a bath of water. Each mold receives a wick and is filled with the molten candle material.

In the regulation of the temperature of the water in the bath during the process lies the secret of the art of making candles. When sufficiently set the candles are mechanically expelled from the molds by machinery on the piston principle, a series of pistons rising up and lifting the candles out. When thoroughly hard, the ends of the candles are trimmed, and they are then ready for packing for the market.

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THE HAUNTED SHIP

By PAUL BRADDON

Nearly twenty years have passed by since the curious facts I shall relate occurred, yet there are many "old inhabitants" of the place who would remember the subject were the real name of the city mentioned.

Besides, more than one of the actors are yet living, and in justice to them a certain degree of secrecy must be observed.

Let it suffice, then, that the place was a well-known river town, one of the termini of a valuable packet-line.

But suddenly strange, wild rumors began to circulate and gain credence—reports that the various steamboats composing the packet line were haunted, one in particular, a fine new steamer that was the pride of the line.

Undoubtedly there was some foundation for these rumors, for no hands could be induced by love or money to make a second trip on the boats.

The evil one was a passenger they solemnly averred.

Nor was this superstition confined to the ignorant.

The owners found it a difficult matter to obtain pilots, stewards, clerks, or even captains, to take charge of the haunted boats.

Thus many trips were lost, and what with the double or treble pay demanded by those bold enough to dare the unseen horrors of the haunted vessels, the packet line was losing money with alarming rapidity.

Finally matters grew so bad that the new boat, the *Emily*, named after the fair daughter of Mr. Sand, junior partner of the firm, was laid up at the wharf, and an advertisement published in the morning papers offering a hundred pounds reward to any person who would spend three consecutive nights on board the haunted vessel.

Before the first edition was fairly dry there was an acceptor of this challenge in a young fellow whom the junior partner had no especial love for.

Tom McCoy had been a rolling stone from early youth.

Handsome, athletic, of good address, the dashing fellow had formed the acquaintance of Emily Sand, won her heart, losing his own at the same time, only to be haughtily dismissed by the proud, stern parent.

The published offer barred nobody, and as the first one to accept, Tom McCoy could not be denied.

Before sunset that evening he went on board, carrying with him a valise.

He spent an hour or two in inspecting his surroundings, but failed to discover anything suspicious.

When it was fairly dark he opened his valise and extracted therefrom a brace of loaded revolvers, pipe and tobacco, then settled down to his lonely vigil, smoking placidly.

Lonely enough at first, but Tom soon had evidence that he was not alone on the boat.

Strange sounds, ghostly whispers, hollow groans and other uncomfortable sounds, agitated the air around him, but still he smoked on, with admirable nonchalance.

The infernal chorus around him grew more and more interesting, and Tom, believing that more serious demonstration would be made soon, prepared his revolvers for use, cocking them deliberately.

Instantly the diabolical sounds died away, and a scornful smile curled the young dare-devil's lips.

But then a deep, sepulchral voice came to his ears:

"Take warning while you may, rash mortal! In consideration of your youth and ignorance, you are spared the punishment justly due to your temerity. But I warn only once! Dare my vengeance again, and you die!"

"Bah!" laughed McCoy. "I could send a bullet straight through your skull this moment, guided by the sound of your voice. Drop your foolery, or blest if I don't do it, too!"

There was no reply to this bold defiance, and though the weird sounds continued through the greater part of the night the ghosts took good care not to crowd the young fellow too closely.

McCoy remained on board until the owners paid him a visit in the morning.

They questioned him closely as to his experience during the night, but he gave them little satisfaction, simply saying that he meant to try it on again that coming night.

Baffling as best he knew how the eager questions and curiosity of such of his friends as had found out his undertaking, Tom ate a hearty breakfast, then locked himself up in his room, sleeping until afternoon.

At the same hour again he boarded the haunted steamer, as before, carrying a valise with him.

It was considerably later on that night when the game began, but it was interesting enough then to more than make amends for the delay.

As he looked and listened, McCoy felt that the ignorant sailors were not to blame for being frightened into deserting the vessel.

Strange sounds, that even he could not satisfactorily account for, came from various quarters, dimly outlined as by a supernatural light, floated noiselessly here and there, now appearing to walk on deck or in the cabin, again floating through the air.

But his iron nerves were proof against all this, for he had formed his theory, which he confidently believed was the correct one.

Then the crisis came.

He saw a skeleton form, its bones rendered visible by a faint, flickering bluish light that appeared to proceed from the skeleton itself, slowly moving toward him, with one bony hand pointing directly at him.

This uncanny visitor paused when a few yards away, then slowly rose until it was suspended in mid air.

A deep, unearthly voice slowly enunciated the words:

"You have ignored my warning, foolish mortal, and thus richly merit the death I threatened you with. But you shall have one more chance. Abandon your vain hopes—leave the sacred spot—and you may live. Refuse, and you shall die!"

Without a word, McCoy deliberately raised a self-cocking revolver, took careful aim at the hand, and fired.

He heard a faint clatter. He could see that his bullet had shattered the bony hand—that the forefinger had fallen.

He was only given time for that one glance, for a pistol exploded, and he distinctly felt a bullet brush his left cheek, though the skin remained unbroken.

If any doubt had remained as to the materiality of the ghosts that were haunting the Emily, it would have been banished from his mind now.

Not only was it an earthly weapon that had been used, but he saw the flash of burning powder coming from behind and below the glowing skeleton.

Quick as thought Tom opened the slide of the bull's-eye which he had taken care to provide himself with, turning its bright light upon the spot from whence the pistol had been fired.

Only for a moment. Then he closed the slide and leaped swiftly aside, barely in time to escape another shot.

He made no effort to answer this vicious salute, but silently crept away and concealed himself in one of the state-rooms, where he lay in the intense darkness, thinking deeply, undisturbed by the sighs and sounds that still kept up the ghostly chorus.

Once more he heard that unearthly voice, warning him that certain death, amid horrible tortures, awaited him, should he venture to pass the third night aboard the doomed steamer.

He made no reply, simply smiling grimly, and then the day dawned.

As before, he awaited the coming of the owners, and accompanied them ashore.

As before, he ate a hearty breakfast, but then paid a visit to Mr. Sand in his private office.

In a sharp, business-like manner he told what he had heard and seen on board the Emily, making only one reservation for a time, then adding:

"Here is the finger that my 'bullet cut off,' laying it on the desk. 'As you see, it is a part of a skeleton, hung on wires. It was manipulated by a man who held it attached to a pole. I saw the man's face that night, and I am ready to publish the fact, under oath, unless you consent to my marriage with your daughter Emily.'"

Mr. Sand appeared dumfounded for a moment, but then burst into an indignant tirade, which was coolly checked by McCoy.

"I can prove all I say. I suspected the truth all along."

"You took to playing the ghost, you and four men in your employ, thinking to gain your ends for a nominal sum by temporarily ruining the passenger business."

"I can swear to your face, though I saw it only for a moment. And if that is not enough, I have captured one of your 'ghosts,' who has been frightened into confessing the whole plot."

"I have placed him in good hands, and his confession, properly attested, shall be published in all the papers, unless you are reasonable."

"Your daughter loves me, and I will make her a good husband. You can make me your partner,

and I agree to 'lay' all the ghosts that hereafter trouble the packet line.

"Refuse, and I inform your partners, publish all to the world, thus ruining you forever."

Mr. Sand was sensible, and a month later Tom McCoy wedded Emily, taking a wedding trip on her namesake, which was never again troubled with ghosts.

HOW A NATURAL SODA FOUNTAIN IS BORN.

A geyster was born last November in the Puy de Dome district of France, where no such thing had existed before, although the region is rich in mineral water springs and typically volcanic.

The French Administration of Mines, under the direction of M. P. Termier, had undertaken to explore the Puy de Dome region for oil and borings were being made at Martres-d'Artieres. Prof. Ph. Glangeaud of the Faculty of Sciences of Clermont-Ferrand was in charge. After going down 1,361 feet through various sedimentary rocks, including two strata of bitumen, the drill penetrated a layer of water. This, under the action of the carbonic acid gas which it contained, squirted up to a height of fifty feet. For several days it continued intermittently. On Dec. 20 at midnight a violent explosion awakened the inhabitants of near-by villages. Then the geyser rested for three days, after which it began spouting again and vomited forth a drill 986 feet long and weighing about two and a half tons. The squirting lasted eight hours. Followed four days of quiescence, then began again with greater violence than ever, the water bearing with it much salt, sand, clay and bitumen torn from the strata through which it passed, and this it deposited in a rough circle like the crater of a volcano.

Machinery, buildings and trees were soon encrusted with carbonate of lime, giving the landscape a wintry aspect. The geyser remained active for nine days and eight hours, stopped on June 3, and after a few hours resumed work intermittently. On Jan. 27 it spouted forth an enormous quantity of gas, bitumen and mineral water at a temperature of 80 degrees F. With a few intermissions it continued till Feb. 28, when it ceased with a violent explosion of gas.

Prof. Glangeaud says that the orifice is now plugged by a great mass of bitumen which for the moment prevents its eruption, though this is likely to be resumed at any time when the pressure of the gas becomes great enough to blow out the cork from the neck of the bottle.

In thirty-one days the geyser threw forth about 220,000 cubic yards of mineral water, or as much as all the springs at Vichy give in a year. The solid matter it ejected weighed about 1,800 tons, including several hundred pounds of bitumen a day.

It is simply the carbonic acid gas in the water that causes the eruption; the temperature is too low for this to be the cause, but the water is just like that contained in a siphon of seltzer, which squirts forth as soon as the pressure is removed and for the same reason. The geysers of Iceland are caused by steam; those in Yellowstone Park are of both types.

Fame and Fortune Weekly

NEW YORK, APRIL 15, 1921.

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ITEMS OF INTEREST

ELEVATOR ACCIDENTS.

Considering the number of elevators in New York City, 13,500 in all, the percentage of accidents is very small indeed. On each of the three hundred and thirteen working days of 1919, six million passengers were carried through the 10,000 miles of elevator shafts, making a total of 1,878,000,000 passengers for the year, but only one passenger out of every 87,500,000 was killed in the elevator trips. This is owing to the excellent inspection by the office of the Superintendent of Buildings and also by the insurance companies.

FISH HAD FALSE TEETH.

A fish wearing false teeth was hooked a few days ago in the Gulf of Mexico, near Indian Rocks, Fla., by A. L. Anderson, of Independence, Ind. Mr. Anderson was invited to go out in a boat with H. H. Ingersoll, a well-known resident of Indian Rocks. During the day they brought up a specimen of the "swell toad," or burfish variety. As the hook was pulled out it brought with it a front plate with four false teeth attached to a gold bridge. Later it was learned by the astonished fisherman that a few days before a visitor from Oldsmar, a near-by resort, had dropped his teeth while bathing.

MONTANA SAPPHIRES.

Sapphires taken from the mines in Fergus County, Mont., from their discovery 20 years ago up to the end of last year were valued at \$2,000,000, according to a report of the syndicate operating the mines.

The mining property consists of 1,550 acres with a sapphire lode extending five and a half miles. The working at present is at a 250-foot level and the ore is broken up by low-power nitro-explosive. The property consists of a series of 18-lode claims. The average yield per lode of 18 cubic feet of ore is 37 carats.

Many of the sapphires are of the finest variety of gem stones. A stone of four carats brings from \$30 to \$300 a carat, according to quality. One found in 1919 weighed 10 carats in the rough, which cut to 5 carats. It was sold in Hatton Garden, London, for \$2,000.

HOLDS THE "DRUNK" RECORD.

John Towers, forty-two, who gave his address as No. 429 West 42d street, New York City, was arraigned in Men's Night Court the other night before Magistrate Tobias on a charge of disorderly conduct.

The complainant, Patrolman Golden of the West 47th Street Station, said that Towers had been "yelling and pulling people's coat tails and annoying women" at Broadway and 47th street.

Fingerprint records showed that Towers, under seventeen aliases, had been convicted of intoxication thirty-five times and of disorderly conduct twice since 1913—a record for this State, according to Magistrate Tobias.

Towers, according to his own statement, had been released only yesterday morning. He was sent back to the workhouse for three months—a sentence which will bring his total number of days in jail up to 1,503.

LAUGHS

"They have called two doctors in for consultation." "And do the doctors agree?" "I believe they have agreed upon the price."

He—Think twice, love, before you refuse me. She—Why should I think twice? He—Because, my dear, a woman never thinks twice the same.

"What are you plunging back in the water for, Pat? You just swam ashore." "Shure, Oi had to save meself first; now Oi'm goin' back to fetch Moike."

Floorwalker—Cloaks, madam? Stout Lady—Yes, but send me a short, fat girl; I won't be waited on by one of these tall, aggravating, slim girls.

"You should have cut off every avenue of escape," said the sergeant at the desk. "We did so," replied the patrolman; "but the fellow got away by going down a side street."

"Come, now," said mamma, who had taken the children for a walk through the Zoo, "let's go home and see papa. "Oh! no," protested Elsie; "let's see these other monkeys first."

"Can you tell me what a smile is, Elsie?" asked the father of his little daughter. "A smile is a laugh that cracks one's face without breaking it open," replied the small observer.

Bessie—Oh, by the way, Nellie was talking about you last evening. Kate—the hateful thing. Bessie—Oh, but she said only the nicest things about you. Kate—I wonder what mean thing she is getting ready to do to me.

"Doctor," said the patient, after paying his bill, "if there is anything in the theory of the transmigration of souls you'll be a warhorse after death." "That sounds rather flattering," remarked Dr. Price-Price. "Yes; you're such a splendid charger."

ITEMS OF GENERAL INTEREST

KILLS LARGE GOLDEN EAGLE.

A massive eagle of the golden eagle species was killed at Medford, Cal., recently by O. Venturini. The bird measured seven feet from tip to tip and is of the type which was familiar to residents in this district forty years ago, but has been rarely seen in this portion of California of late years.

GAVE WIFE PENNY A DAY.

The stingiest husband in the world has just been discovered in Denver, Colo., according to his wife. He gave her a penny a day, according to charges in a divorce complaint filed in the District Court by Mrs. Ida Robinson against Theodore Robinson.

Mrs. Robinson alleges that she worked and paid the living expenses for herself and husband, and that the latter gave her 1 cent a day out of his earnings and kept the ballance.

INDIAN IS BURIED ALIVE.

Charges that William Taylor, an Indian afflicted with smallpox, was buried alive on Hat Creek, California, to the District Attorney for investigation. The allegation was made by Chief Samson Grant of the Hat Creek Indians, who stated that he had been so told by his daughter, Mrs. Lela Rhodes.

Mrs. Rhodes, who is vouched for by the local Indian agent, wrote to her father that two Indians buried Taylor after nightfall. Before they took the coffin to the grave, the letter said, they heard Taylor kicking, but were afraid to open the box, fearing the wrath of the health officer.

OFFERS HARDING A COW.

The White House has neither a milkman nor a cow stable, so when W. A. Brewerton of Libertyville, Ill., offered the President a Jersey cow as a gift, Secretary George Christian said there was no place for her, and the gift probably will not be accepted.

President Taft had his Holstein "Pauline Wayne" housed in the Quartermaster's stables, from where she was brought to the rear of the White House grounds every day. Mr. Brewerton's letter to the President said:

"It is my hobby to raise good Jersey cows and to place them where they will be most appreciated. I beg of you that you do me the honor to receive within the next few weeks such an animal for the personal use of Mrs. Harding and yourself and that little Chicago youngster who, the newspaper say, will spend considerable of her time with you."

A YOUNG WIDOW.

The romance of Corrine Villines, aged fourteen, of Clay, Ky., a student at Oakland City College, and Gettis Wilder, aged nineteen, came to an end at Princeton, Ind., the other day when the young husband died at the Methodist Hospital following an operation for appendicitis. The couple were married one month ago after a brief courtship.

Wilder, a grocery clerk at Oakland City, met the Kentucky girl, who had been placed in the college by her grand-parents less than two months ago.

They became infatuated and planned an elopement, but their plans were frustrated by college authorities, who, however, advised Wilder to talk to the girl's grandparents. He did so and obtained consent for the marriage, which took place Dec. 31. Wilder and his bride lived in Oakland City. The widow will be fifteen years old this month.

RAT TURNS ON GAS.

Elizabeth Schweikert, 14 years old, who lived with her mother and step-father, Mr. and Mrs. Richard H. Stewart, in Newark, N. J., was found dead the other day after a rat, running along a pipe to a gas heater in the parlor turned on the jet and allowed the gas to escape. Her family and a deputy county physician declared that the accident could have happened in no other way.

The girl went to bed at 11 o'clock at night, and an hour later her mother went in and turned off the heater. At 7 o'clock the following morning her step-father got his coat from the parlor and went to work. He said there was no odor of gas and the girl appeared to be sleeping. When the mother prepared breakfast and went to call Elizabeth there was no answer. The absence of gas odor was explained by the fact that two windows in the room were opened half way. The jet was only opened slightly.

The house has been infested by rats and two terriers usually kept in the house overnight were put outside for the night.

FINDS \$1,500 IN MATTRESS.

When Mrs. Minerva Miller, who lives with her son, Clyde V. Mauck, of Mill Hall, Pa., ripped open the old tick the other day with the intention of burning the feathers, she found a cloth covered package from which a number of greenbacks stuck out, while a few had become loosened and were in the feathers. On removing and carefully opening the package it was found to be composed entirely of money, the bills ranging in denomination from \$1 to \$20. Those on the outer side of the package were soiled and destroyed to such an extent that it was difficult to ascertain their value, but it was estimated the find will amount to from \$1,500 to \$1,800.

The feather tick was given to Mrs. Miller by an aunt, who died twenty-five years ago. This aunt was known to possess money, which she would not deposit in banks, but kept about the house. When she died diligent search was made for the money, but it never was found, and the discovery reveals the hiding place of at least a portion of the woman's savings, a quarter of a century after her death.

When she gave the tick to her daughter she made no intimation of the presence of the package of money secreted in the feathers, and Mrs. Miller did not have the remotest idea of the value of the tick on which she had been sleeping night after night.

INTERESTING NEWS ARTICLES

11-YEAR-OLD BOY KILLS HIS BROTHER

Warren Branfield, 11 years old, was detained by the police at Pontiac, Mich., Feb. 28, pending investigation into the killing in a woods near Farmington of his 9-year-old brother, Clare. The older boy shot and killed his brother "to put him out of his misery," he said, after having accidentally wounded him while demonstrating his skill with a revolver.

According to Warren's statement to the Sheriff, he fired the first shot in an effort to see how close he could come to his brother without hitting him. The younger lad turned at the shot, and was struck in the side. Warren then placed the muzzle against the prostrate child's head and pulled the trigger, killing him instantly.

"I wanted to put him out of his misery," he said. "I didn't want to see him suffer."

A CENT'S A CENT FOR A' THAT

Ben Franklin, out of his wealth of wisdom, gave us the advice: "Take care of the pennies and the pounds will take care of themselves." And it would be well for us to take this advice to heart. There are not many people, however, who know the real power of the penny. An excellent editorial on this subject recently appeared in the La Crosse (Wis.) Tribune.

"More than one man," says the Tribune, "has dwelt upon the power of the penny."

"And, it is true that millions have derided the power of the penny. 'A penny has no power,' they insist. And, to prove their case, they point to what one can buy with a penny. They labor under the delusion that all one may do with a penny is to buy something with it. Buying immediately ends the penny's power. Rather, it transfers it power to another person."

"Saving a penny, however, utilizes the penny's power."

"That this is beyond question is demonstrated by a statistician who recently completed some interesting penny figures. He found that if a penny had been invested at 5 per cent interest the day Columbus discovered the New World, that penny, with compounded interest, to-day would be \$4,944,019.71."

"Never again belittle the power of a penny. It has power, all right!"

"The lack of power is in the makeup of the man who never learned that if he took care of his pennies the dollars would look out for themselves."

—BUY W. S. S.—

ALL TAKE LIFE EASY ON "ISLAND OF CALM."

A great painter and writer called Mallorca, in the Mediterranean, "the Island of Calm," for there every one moves, rests, talks, walks and conducts his courtships as if the day had forty-eight hours, the mile about 16,000 feet and the span of human life 700 years, so little haste do they make in living and enjoying life, says the article.

One Mallorquin, of noble family, is said to have

waited forty-five years in determining to lead his sweetheart to the altar, with no protest from her and without having been slain in exasperation by his mother-in-law.

These people who take life so leisurely are not lazy, shiftless or unpleasant in personal appearance or manner. They are intelligent, honest, capable of work, sober and economical. These characteristics, preserved throughout centuries of uninterrupted peace and tranquillity, have made them peaceable, trusting and home-loving. The men are of medium height, strong and agile.

And as for the women, they possess the same lovely skin as the women of North America, features as if sculptured by Phidias or Praxiteles, and they walk like goddesses. But they know nothing of the "joy of living," due partially to ancestral Arabic influences and to the fact that their island has for so long been under strict religious repression.

Mallorca is the loveliest cage on the planet, its wonderful, intelligent and gracious women being as bored as odalisques in a harem without a Sultan.

ODD NOTES

At the age of 54, Mrs. E. L. Lyons, of San Diego, Cal., is a great-grandmother.

The number of women students attending German universities has increased nearly fourfold during the past decade.

Children are not allowed in the streets of Norway after dark.

It is a serious offense to ride a bicycle anywhere near the city of Constantinople.

Teak, during the reign of the Burmese kings, was the royal wood, and the king had a right to all teak.

It is believed that more fish are found off the Grand Banks of Newfoundland than in any other part of the world.

If a horse ate as much as a caterpillar, in proportion to its size, it would consume a ton of hay every 24 hours.

The wet flat lands of Ecuador produce a vine yielding a fruit which, when dried, forms a sponge superior to animal sponges.

An authority on finance, after exhaustive investigation finds that in America only one rich man's son in 17 dies rich.

The Koreans do not receive credit for progressiveness, but a Korean invented the potter's wheel and a Korean potter discovered the art of underglazing. It is also said that they invented movable type and made general use of it long before it was known anywhere else.

HIS IMPER- SONATOR.

Maxim Gorky, the playwright and radical writer, had an unusual experience when traveling in America during his exile from Russia, according to a story going the rounds of London. Among the towns he visited was Georgetown, S.C., where he found one of his own plays, "The Lower Depths," billed together with an announcement that "at the end of the performance the author will appear in person to salute and thank the audience."

Gorky naturally went to enjoy this treat, and found that when the curtain fell after the last act of his play a man made up to resemble him came before the footlights and told the audience in broken English how flattered he felt at the reception accorded his drama. Going round to the stage door, Gorky tackled his impersonator, who confessed that he had perpetrated the same fraud in many small towns.

"I have also," he added, "passed myself off as Ros-tand, Sudermann and Maurice Don-nay. It pleases the public and does the real au-thors no harm."

Gorky was so amused at the man's cheek that he promised not to expose him.

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(Correspondence of The Associated Press).—Nearly fifty skulls, believed to have belonged to people who inhabited the island of Masbate, one of the Philippine group just south of the island of Luzon, at a much earlier period than the present Philipino race, were found in a cave recently on that island by Dr. W. D. Smith, chief of the mines division of the bureau of science of the Philippine government.

It is the belief of Dr. Smith that the location of the cave was not known to the natives of the island, being far from any habitation.

Besides the skulls many primitive implements of carpentry and warfare were collected and brought to Manila. These consisted of stone hatchets, axes, scrapers, pipes, pots and a strange amulet. Deer teeth and shells were also found in the cave, leading Dr. Smith to the conclusion that the primitive cave dwellers lived by hunting and fishing.

Professor H. O. Beyer, of the anthropological department of the University of the Philippines, who has the skulls and other relics brought from the cave, expressed the belief that they belonged to the early Idonesian peoples.

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